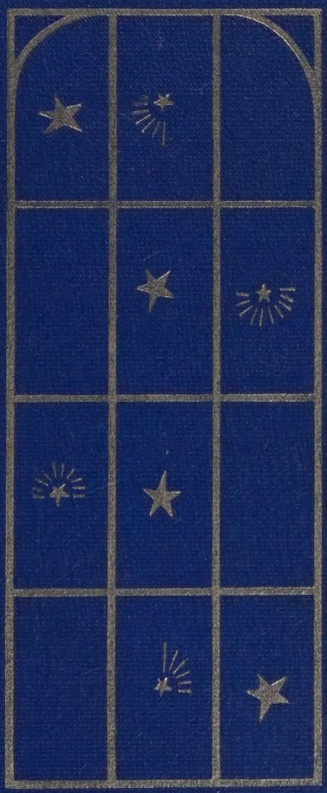
The STARS THROUGH MAGIC CASEMENTS



JULIA WILLIAMSON

THE STARS THROUGH
MAGIC CASEMENTS

Helen Byrd Reeves
July 1935

Remember the star-gazing
at camp!
Mildred

HE SAW A GREAT AND KINGLY FIGURE STANDING BESIDE HIM

[*page 15*]

THE STARS
THROUGH MAGIC CASEMENTS

EDITED BY

JULIA WILLIAMSON

ILLUSTRATED BY
EDNA M. REINDEL

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK MCMXXX

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To

FRANCES

COLKET

COLESBERRY

and

JOHN

who have listened

to all these stories

FOREWORD

Long, long ago, long before the dawn of history, ages before the first crude picture was hammered out on stone, or the first book written, men of all races and of every land studied the great book of the heavens. They learned to recognize the stars that seemed to come and go with the changing seasons and grouped them into constellations, seeing in the sky bears and lions, serpents and dragons, hunters with their huge hunting dogs, men and women, kings and queens, and mighty heroes.

The story-tellers, minstrels, medicine men, wove stories about these pictures and told them over and over again around the campfire or beside the glowing hearth; and after they had told and retold them for centuries, the poets, looking at the same stars through the magic casements of imagination, gathered the folk tales together and, touching them with the beauty of poesy, wrote them down that they might live forever.

Some of these stories from north and south

and east and west have been collected in this book that those who still sit around the campfires and learn to love the beauty and the wonder of the stars, may call them by name and enjoy their stories that have come down to us from the childhood of the world through immemorial ages.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A collection of stories and poems means that the editor owes thanks to many authors and their publishers. A story-teller finds her material here, there, and everywhere, in widely scattered sources. Some tales she must remake for herself, but other stories have taken such delightful form through the vision of skilled writers, that she cannot bear to change a word but borrows them with eager appreciation.

The following acknowledgments are made with thanks to those who have courteously given permission for the use of the stories and poems in this book:

To Mrs. William Sharp for "The Great Bear" and "Finn and the Great Bear" from *Where the Forest Murmurs,* by William Sharp (Fiona Macleod).

To Arthur C. Parker, Director of the Rochester Municipal Museum, for "The Seven Brothers of the Star Cluster" from *The Myths and Legends of the Seneca,* Volume 27 of the Buffalo Historical Society Reports.

To the New York State Museum for "Ga-Do-Waas and His Star-Belt" from *Myths and Legends of the New York Iroquois,* by Harriet Maxwell Converse, Bulletin 127.

To Macmillan and Company, London, for "The Star Lovers" from *Green Willow,* by Grace James; and to The Macmillan Company, New York, for "Stars" from *Flame and Shadow,* by Sara Teasdale, and "The Divine Musician" from *Children of the Dawn,* by Elsie Finnimore Buckley.

To Henry Holt and Company for "Canis Major" from *West-Running Brook,* by Robert Frost.

To Frederick A. Stokes Company for "Why the Leaves Turn Yellow and Red" from *Around an Iroquois Story-Fire,* by Mabel Powers.

To Miss Corinne Chisholm for the poem, *To Play with Stars,* written by a group of Golden Eaglet Girl Scouts at camp with her in Georgia.

Most of all thanks are due to A. Maynard, English Girl Guider, who first aroused my interest in the stars with her entertaining and spicy account of the Bears and the Royal Family; and to the Girl Scouts, and other campers, who have listened to these stories out under the

stars, where they are even more enchanting than between the pages of a book.

It has not been possible to get in touch with John Halsham, whose delightful poem about the Great Bear was found in "Junior Modern Poetry" of the *King's Treasures of Literature,* published by Dent; or with Dr. William Carlos Williams whose "Peace on Earth" was found in Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry,* published by Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York. It is hoped that if this book should come under their eyes that they will pardon the inclusion of their verse without express permission.

The following books have been used in tracing stories and studying the stars; they are recommended to those who want to know more about the heavens, or their stories:

The Call of the Stars, by John R. Kippax
(G. P. Putnam, New York).

Starlore of all the Ages, by William Tyler Olcott
(G. P. Putnam, New York).

A Field Book of Stars, by William Tyler Olcott
(G. P. Putnam, New York).

Legends of the Stars, by Mary Proctor
(Harrap, London).

The Metamorphoses of Ovid, translated by Frank Justus Miller
(Heinemann, London).

The Heroes, by Charles Kingsley
(Macmillan, New York).

The Wonderbook, by Nathaniel Hawthorne
(Houghton Mifflin, Boston).

Complete Poems, by Robert Louis Stevenson
(Charles Scribner, New York).

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STARS

Alone in the night
  On a dark hill
With pines around me
  Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars
  Over my head,
White and topaz
  And misty red;

Myriads with beating
  Hearts of fire
That æons
  Cannot vex or tire;

Up the dome of heaven
  Like a great hill,
I watch them marching
  Stately and still,

And I know that I
  Am honored to be
Witness
  Of so much majesty.

SARA TEASDALE

From *Flame and Shadow*, by Sara Teasdale. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

LOOKING NORTH AT THE CONSTELLATIONS ON A WINTER'S EVE

LOOKING SOUTH AT THE CONSTELLATIONS ON A SUMMER'S EVE

CALLISTO AND ARCAS

A GREEK MYTH

IN the days when Diana, the huntress, roved through the woods of Arcadia with her train of nymphs, there was one of them almost as lovely as the goddess herself. She was named Callisto, and was so beautiful that she had no need to spin soft wools for her adornment or to spend time in arranging her hair elaborately to make it more lovely than it was. With only a brooch to fasten her simple white gown and a soft white fillet to bind her flowing locks, she ran through the forest in search of game.

Now Jupiter, the Great Thunderer, himself, was filled with such admiration of Callisto's beauty as he watched her roaming through the leafy glades and open fields, that Juno, his queen, was filled with jealousy. One day as she saw Callisto starting out,

spear in hand, she became so infuriated with the girl's grace and charm, that she summoned her chariot, drawn by its argus-eyed peacocks, and swooped down to earth close to Callisto's side.

"So," she cried in a fury, "you are the mortal who dares to set her beauty above that of the immortals!"

Callisto shrank back before Juno's blazing eyes. "No, no," she answered tremblingly. "I am but a huntress who loves the woods. I do not set my beauty above that of others. I am but a mortal, the immortals are far more beautiful than I."

But Juno was not to be propitiated.

"Do you dare to defy me!" she exclaimed. "Do you stand before me and face me down? You shall suffer. I will take away your beauty in which you delight."

Seizing Callisto by the hair, she threw her face forward on the ground. The terrified girl stretched out her arms and tried to pray for mercy; to her horror she saw her softly

rounded arms grow rough with black shaggy hair, her rosy finger tips turn to sharp claws. Her lips became broad coarse jaws and, when she tried to speak and beg for compassion, harsh growls came from her throat. The goddess mounted her chariot and was whirled away. The hapless nymph wandered about the fields in despair, outwardly a bear, inwardly she was still human. She fled not only before the hunters and their baying hounds, but also before other wild animals. Though a bear herself, she shuddered at the sight of other bears on the mountainsides.

Her greatest sorrow was her separation from her small son, Arcas. She prowled around her old haunts in the hope of seeing him. He, of course, grew up in ignorance of what had become of his mother, for no one knew where or why she had so strangely disappeared. He, like her, became an ardent hunter and roved over hill and dale in search of game. He was fifteen years of age,

a strong, tall lad, when one day while hunting, he chanced upon his mother. So suddenly did they face each other that Callisto recognizing him, forgot for a moment that he was seeing her only as a wild beast, and sprang toward him, her eyes gleaming with affection. Arcas shrank back, frightened, and drew his spear. In a moment it would have been plunged into her heart, had not Jupiter observed their plight, and in a flash turned Arcas into a bear also. At once Arcas knew his mother and ran to her; for the first time in fifteen years Callisto was happy in having as a companion the one person whom she loved most dearly. Jupiter realized that their happiness would be but short if they continued to live a hunted life, fleeing from both man and beast on earth, so he caught them up in a whirlwind and set them as stars in the sky.

When Juno saw Callisto and Arcas shining in the heavens, her wrath was kindled even more hotly than before. She mounted her swift peacock chariot once more and

swirled down to old Oceanus and Tethys, rulers of the waters. So blazing was her anger that they at once questioned her as to the reason for it.

"Look into the sky, to-night, when darkness obscures it!" she answered. "There you will see a constellation more beautiful than all the others, set in the place of honor where the last and shortest circle encompasses the pole. It is the nymph, Callisto, who dared to rival my beauty, whom I changed into a bear. Of what use is my power if she and her son are to be forever immortal in the heavens?"

"But why have you sought us?" they asked.

"If this insult to your foster child stirs you at all," cried Juno, angrily, "I ask you to refuse your cooling waters to these bears; never let them sink into your green depths."

Her demand was granted and to this day the Great Bear and her cub, the Little Bear, prowl round and round the North Star,

never dropping below the horizon into the refreshing waters of the ocean.

RETOLD FROM OVID

So the ancient Greeks explained the constellations of the Great and Little Bears.

WHY THE LEAVES TURN YELLOW AND RED

AN IROQUOIS LEGEND

MOST people do not realize that a great bear chase is going on forever, high, high up in the sky. The Indians know just how and why it is that these things are as they are. They know why this bear chase is on and how it came to be.

Once, many moons ago, a great bear appeared in the forest. This was long before the white man came. No one knew whence the bear came, he was so fierce and strong that no other animal could meet him and live. Game grew scarce and the trail was strewn with bones. The Indians saw they must free the forest of this monster or no animals could live. A council was called to decide how and when to attack him.

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That night three Indian brothers who were great hunters had a dream. Each dreamed he had brought down the bear and carried its heart back to the tribe. At sunrise the brothers set out on the bear trail, vowing they would never rest and never return until their arrows had found the heart of the great bear.

For many days they followed the track of the monster through the forests and up the mountainsides to the North. It grew very cold and often the bear track was lost in the blinding snow, but on and on they climbed; they would not give up the chase.

Sometimes the shadow of the great bear was seen on the snow but a few bow-shots ahead but before they could get within arrow flight it had disappeared. All the bear-trees along the trail were searched but no bear was to be found.

So sure, however, were the three brothers that they would soon overtake the bear that they began to prepare for it. The oldest brother carried the arrows, he was to lead

the attack and shoot the game. The second brother found a kettle where once a camp had been. He carried it along to cook the game. The youngest brother carried an armful of sticks with which to light the fire when they were ready to cook the bear. So on and on and on went the brothers, the first carrying the bow and arrows, the second the kettle, the third the firesticks.

Farther and farther over the snowy mountain trails went the brave persistent hunters. At last they drew near the jumping-off place of the world—the place where earth and sky meet. It was there for the first time that they saw the bear. At last he stood before them. In the light of the setting sun his huge body was outlined against the sky.

The first hunter drew his bow and as the arrow left the bowstring the bear made a quick turn and ran up the great sky trail. Through the valleys of mist and over mountains of white clouds now sped the wonderful sky bear. The hunters leaped over the edge

of the world and followed. They too had found the great sky trail.

"If we cannot get him on earth," they said, "we will chase him through this world till we have our kettle of bear meat."

Once an arrow almost pierced the bear's heart but a cloud passed between them and the arrow dropped to the earth. The tireless hunters would not give up the chase. On and on over the great sky trail to the North they ran in pursuit of the bear.

They still continue the pursuit to this day. Moons have come and moons have gone, centuries have passed, still the bear chase goes on. The hunters have not yet found the bear's heart so they will not give up the chase and return to their tribe.

In the spring when the dogwood flowers, the Indians point to the great dipper in the North. In the bowl they see the bear, in the handle the three Indians.

"Now hunters start after bear," they say. "When the leaves turn yellow and red they think they get him."

The spring passes. All summer the bear circles slowly, as bears are wont, through the northern sky with the hunters in pursuit. Just before the leaves fall the chase comes very close. The hunters press hard upon the bear. Finding himself at bay he rises and turns upon his pursuers. An eager arrow finds his heart. He rolls over on his back and the red blood drips to earth and stains many of the leaves red.

The heat of the chase causes the fat of the bear to melt. The oil drips down and other trees become covered with yellow wax-like grease. This is why the leaves of the trees turn red and yellow in the autumn, the Indians say.

At last the Indians have their game. But no, the bear soon rises and disappears into the great sky den. There through the winter months he rests gathering fresh and new life.

In the spring the first rays of the sun awaken him. Again he sets forth from the sky den. The hunters wandering through

the sky, again find his tracks upon the trail, once more the chase begins. And it will go on, say the Indians, until the stars fall and the moon drops out of the sky.

MABEL POWERS

THE GREAT BEAR

A WELSH ARTHURIAN LEGEND

AT sunset the young son of the great Pendragon came over the brow of a hill that stepped forward from the dark company of mountains and leaned over the shoreless sea which fills the West and drowns the North. All day he had been wandering alone, his mind heavy with wonder over many things. He had heard strange things of late, tales about his heroic father and the royal clan, how they were not as other men but half divine. They were not gods, he knew, for they could be slain in battle or die with the crowding upon them of many years; but they were more terrible in battle than the greatest of men, they had the vision and knowledge of the druids, and were lordly beyond all men in mien and in beauty of courtesy, and lived beyond the common span of years, and had secret com-

munion with the noble and invisible company. He had heard, too, of his own destiny: that he, too, was to be a great king, as much greater than Pendragon, as Pendragon was above all the kings of the world. What was Destiny, he wondered. Then again he turned over and over in his mind all the names he could think of that he might choose as his own; for the time had come for him to put away the name of his childhood and to take on that by which he should be known among men.

He came over the brow of the hill, and out of the way of the mountain wind, and, being tired, lay down among the heather and stared across the gray wilderness of the sea. The sun set, and the invisible throwers of the nets trailed darkness across the waves and up the wild shores and over the faces of the cliffs. Stars climbed out of the shadowy abysses, and the great chariots of the constellations rode from the West to the East and from the North to the South. His

eyes closed but when he opened them again to see if a star, quivering on the verge of the horizon, had in that brief moment sprung like a deer above the drowning wave or had sunk like a white seabird passing out of sight, he saw a great and kingly figure standing beside him. So great in stature, so splendid in kingly beauty was the mysterious one who had so silently joined him, that he thought this must be one of the gods.

"Do you not know me, my son?" said the kingly stranger.

The boy looked at him in awe and wonder, but unrecognizingly.

"Do you not know me, my son?" he heard again. . . . "For I am your father Pendragon. But my home is yonder, and there I go before long, and that is why I have come to you as a vision in a dream," and as he spoke, he pointed to the constellation of the Arth, or Bear, which nightly prowls through the vast abysses of the polar sky.

When the boy turned his gaze from the

great constellation which hung in the dark wilderness overhead, he saw that he was alone again. While he yet wondered in great awe at what he had seen and heard, he felt himself float like a mist and become like a cloud, and as a cloud rise beyond the brows of the hills, and ascend the invisible stairways of the sky.

When for minutes that were as hours he had moved thus mysteriously into the pathless and unvisited realms of the air, he saw that he had left the highest clouds like dust on the valley road after one has climbed to the summit of a mountain; nor could he see the earth save as a blind and obscure thing that moved between the twilights of night and dawn.

It seemed to him thereafter that a swoon came over him, in which he passed beyond the far off blazing fires of strange stars. At last, suddenly, he stood on the verge of Arth, or Arth-Uthyr,* the Great Bear. There he

* Arth-Uthyr is pronounced Arth-Uir or Arthur. In ancient British Arth means Bear, and Uthyr great, wondrous.

saw, with the vision of immortal not of mortal eyes, a company of most noble and majestic figures, seated at what he thought a circular abyss but which had the semblance of a vast table. Each of these seven great knights or lordly kings had a star upon his forehead, and these were the stars of the mighty constellation of the Bear which the boy had seen night after night from his home among the mountains by the sea.

It was with a burning throb at his heart that he recognized in the king of all these kings no other than himself.

While he looked, in amazement so great that he could hear the pulse of his own heart, as in the silence of the wood one hears the tapping of a woodpecker, he saw this mighty phantom-self rise till he stood towering over all there and heard a voice as though an ocean rose and fell through the eternal silences.

"Comrades in God," it said, "the time is come when that which is great shall become small."

And when the voice was ended, the mighty figure faded into the blue darkness, and only a great star shone where the uplifted dragon-helm had brushed the roof of heaven. One by one the white lords of the sky followed in his mysterious way, till once more were to be seen only the stars of the Bear.

The boy-king dreamed that he fell as a floating meteor, and then that he floated over land and sea as a cloud, and then that he sank as mist upon the hills of his own land.

A noise of wind stirred in his ears, and he felt the chill dew creep over his hands like the stealthy cold lip of the tide. He rose stumblingly, and stood, staring around him. He was in the same spot, under the brow of the hill that looked over the dim shoreless seas, now obscure with the dusk. He glanced upward and saw the stars of the Great Bear in their slow majestic march around the Pole. Then he remembered.

He went slowly down the hillside, his mind heavy with thought. When he came to the place of the King his father, lo, Pendragon

and all his fierce chivalry came out to meet him, for the arch-druid had foretold that the great king-to-be had received his mystic initiation among the holy silence of the hills.

"I am no longer Snowbird, the child," the boy said, looking at them fearlessly and as though already king. "Henceforth I am Arth-Uthyr for my place is in the Great Bear which we see yonder in the North."

So all there acclaimed him as Arthur, the wondrous one of the stars, the Great Bear.

"I am old," said Pendragon, "and soon you will be king, Arthur, my son. So ask now a great boon of me and it shall be granted to you."

Then Arthur remembered his dream.

"Father and King," he said, "when I am King after you I shall make a new order of knights, who shall be strong and pure as the immortal ones, and be tender as women, and simple as little children. But first I ask of you seven virgin knights to be of my chosen company. To-morrow let the wood-

wrights make for me a round dais or table such as that where we eat our roasted meats and drink from the ale-horns, but round and of a size whereat I and my chosen knights may sit at ease."

The King listened and all there.

"So be it," said the King.

Then Arthur chose the seven flawless virgin knights, and called them to him.

"Ye are now children of the Great Bear," he said, "and comrades and liegemen to me, Arthur, who shall be King of the West. And ye shall be known as the Knights of the Round Table. But no man shall make a mock of that name and live: and in the end that name shall be so great in the mouths and minds of men that they shall consider no glory of the world to be so great as to be the youngest and frailest of that knighthood."

And that is how Arthur, the son of Pendragon, who three years later became King of the West, read the Rune of the Stars that are called the Great Bear, and took his name

upon him, and from the strongest and purest and the noblest of the land made knighthood, such as the world had not seen, such as the world since has not known.

FIONA MACLEOD (WILLIAM SHARP)

FINN AND THE GREAT BEAR

A CELTIC LEGEND

Heard from a fisherman of Ross "foregathered with" in the Sound of Morvern.

ONE day, Finn, before he was born King of the West, a thousand years earlier than that and maybe thousands more on the top of that thousand, went hunting a great Bear beyond the highest mountains in Ross and Sutherland. It came to the Ord, and then seeing there was no more land, it went into the sea with an awesome plunge, like Iceland in the story before it swam away from Scotland, so that the fish were knocked out of the nets and the fishing cobles were blown on the shores like buckies, and the tides ran like hares until they leaped into the sea again at the rocks of Wick and over Cromarty Cliffs. Aye, it is said a green wave ran right through the great Kirk at Inverness; and that away across the lands of

Mackenzie and Chisholm, of Fraser and Gordon, a storm of foam blew like snow against the towers and steeples of Aberdeen. At least all this might well have been, if in those old ancient days there had been any Aberdeen or Inverness to see it, or if there had been any cobles or nets then, as, for all you or I or the wind know, there may have been. Well, the Bear swam due north, and Finn after him and his great hounds Luarth and Dorch. It took them a month to come up with it, and then it was among mountains of solid ice with the sea between hard as granite. Then it came to the place where there's an everlasting rainbow. The Bear climbed this, to jump to the other side of the Pole, but Luarth ran up one side and Dorch the other and Finn hurled his great shining spears, one after the other: so that down came the Bear with a rush and so great was the noise and the stamash that the icebergs melted and out flew thousands of solanders and gray swans and scats and

God knows what all, every kind of bird that is with a web to its foot. The hounds fell into the water and the Bear lay on the floe like a wounded seal, but Finn never moved an inch but put spear after spear into the Bear.

"Well, you're dead now," he said, "and if you're not, you ought to be," he added, seeing that the Bear was up again and ready to be off.

"This can't go on," said God Allfather, so He swung a noose and sagged up the Bear into the black Arctic sky. But the hounds hung on to its tail, and so were carried up too. And as for Finn, he took the hero leap, and with one jump was on the Pole, and with the next was in the Northman's Torch (Arcturus), and with the third was on the Hill of Heaven itself. And that's where he went back to on the day he died after his three hundred years of mortal life. He's never moved since, and he won't move again till Judgment Day. And by the same token, you can see the Great Bear prowling

around the Pole, still, and Finn the Watchman never letting him go by, night or day, day or night, and far away down are the two hounds that herd the Great Bear and his mate. And when these come too near, Finn hurls his spears, and that's when we see the Northern Lights. And behind the streamers and the auroras and the rainbows and the walls of ice Finn looks into the Garden of Eden—Paradise as they say, just the Flatheanas of the old tales, the old songs. And who would be doubting it?

FIONA MACLEOD (WILLIAM SHARP)

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS OF EPHESUS

A LEGEND OF THE MIDDLE AGES

THERE was fear and consternation in the city of Ephesus for the Emperor Decius had come to visit it. He had come because it had reached his ears that there were many Christians in Ephesus who dared to worship a humble carpenter of Nazareth and refused to sacrifice to the Emperor himself. Magnificent temples adorned with gold and precious jewels had been erected to house the statues of Decius that all might come and do homage before them. But the Christians boldly and steadfastly refused to bow before these images or to burn incense at their altars.

The Emperor decreed death to those who defied him, and many gave up their lives for their faith, but others in fear turned from the Christ and served the Emperor, and

those who still remained Christians hid themselves away and worshiped in secret. But the Emperor was not satisfied, he offered great rewards to those who would betray the Christians to him, rewards of such vast wealth and such tempting honors, that friend was tempted into betraying friend, the father gave up his son, and the son his father, and brother turned against brother. Suspicion and dread lurked at every corner, no man knew whom he could trust.

One day seven handsome, clear-eyed young men, Constantine, Maximian, Malchus, Marcian, Dionysius, John, and Serapion, by name, were brought before Decius, accused of being Christians. They admitted the charge boldly and their eyes met those of the Emperor fearlessly.

"Why have you refused the worship and sacrifice due to me?" he demanded.

"We have given you the obedience due to an earthly ruler," answered Constantine, "but we worship only the God who reigns above."

"Do you not know your lives are in my hands, and that, unless you sacrifice at my altars, death will be your portion?"

"We know this, O Emperor," they replied, "we have no fear of bodily death for our Lord will give us eternal life, and Him alone will we worship."

So nobly did they face him, that the Emperor hesitated to kill them. He longed to have them for his servants.

"I go to hunt the boar," he said; "consider well your decision. Wealth and a place at my side will be yours if you pay me divine homage, death after slow torture if you refuse. A week, I give you, to decide."

Then he left them, hoping that they might change their minds, knowing well that sudden death is easier to face, than the thought of torture for a week of days and nights. Which was quite true, but the seven youths were firm and resolved to die. They sold their possessions and distributed the purchase money to the poor, and then retired

to a cave in the mountainside to pray for courage and steadfastness.

Now it befell that as the Emperor returned from his hunt, he and his train passed by the mouth of the cave. So weary had the seven youths become after their long vigil of prayer that they slept soundly within.

"Think ye they will change their faith?" asked Decius.

"Never," answered one of his captains. "It is said that they have sold their goods and given away all they possess. They boast that they will defy you again. Their death will be strength to their fellows."

The Emperor was furious. He thought for a minute, then he gave an evil laugh.

"Have the mouth of the cave blocked up with stones. Let them die like rats in the darkness. Let their fellow Christians think that they have run away like cowards. We shall see if their God is able to give them life!"

It was done as the Emperor commanded

and the seven disappeared and no one knew what had become of them, and the years went by and the Emperor himself died, and other emperors lived and reigned and died, and Rome itself fell, and within the cave the sleepers still slept.

Until, after many years, it chanced that a citizen of Ephesus was building a new stable and, needing more stone, he came upon the pile outside the cave and carried the stones off one by one, until the cave was open again and the warm sunlight streamed in upon the sleepers.

First, John stirred in his sleep, then Serapion rolled over yawning, and Constantine stretched his arms out, until at last all seven were awake. They sat up feeling vigorous and strong after their sleep of centuries, though to them it was as if they had slept for a night.

"Decius returns from the boar hunt today," said one; "shall we go down into the city and proclaim our defiance once more?"

"Perhaps he has forgotten us," said Max-

imian; "would it not be better to wait and pray and let him find us if he will?"

"Better face him bravely," said John, "and show him how fearlessly Christians dare to live and die, than to be trapped like cravens, or hunted down like wild beasts."

"And yet," said Marcian, "should we save our lives if possible, that we may pass on to others our knowledge of the truth?"

"Let Malchus, who is the wisest and cleverest of us, go down into the city once more for food. Let him find out what the Emperor's newest decree is. He may have wearied of his sport and returned to Rome," said Maximian.

They had five gold coins left and with these Malchus went down the mountainside. When he reached the city gate he was amazed to find over it a cross. Fearing it might be a trap of some kind he sought another gate and to his astonishment found that that also had the same sign above it. As he walked into the city he found that the temples had crosses upon them, and that the

name of Jesus was freely mentioned in the open street.

He entered a bakery and laid down one of his gold pieces upon the counter as he asked for bread. The baker gave him the bread and took up the money. Then he looked at him suspiciously.

"Where did you find this coin?" he asked. Malchus hesitated. Was this some trick to trap him?

"It is my own," he answered and turned to leave. But the baker laid hands upon him.

"You have found hidden treasure," he declared. "This is a very ancient piece."

"Ancient?" cried Malchus, taking out another. "Nonsense, it has the Emperor's head upon it."

"The head of Decius," said the baker, "you shall come with me to the Governor and explain."

But Malchus wrenched himself from the man's grasp and fled, but the baker and others pursued him and recaptured him and

putting a rope around his neck led him through the streets. Malchus supposed he was being led to the Emperor, and as he passed through the streets, looked anxiously for some friend or acquaintance by whom he might send a warning to the six still left in the cave. To his growing bewilderment he saw not one familiar face, even the people's clothing seemed strange and unusual.

He was led before the Bishop and the Governor of Ephesus and again was amazed to see the cross displayed on every side.

"Where did you find these coins?" demanded the Bishop.

"I did not find them," protested Malchus, "but a week ago I sold my possessions and these coins were given me. I have but these few left, as with my companions, I gave what I obtained to feed the poor."

"A week ago, in Ephesus, you gave gold to feed the poor," said the Bishop; "through whom, through what church, to whom?"

Malchus was bewildered, he mentioned the names of friends, of his parents who would

vouch for him. But those who heard him shook their heads, the names were all unknown.

"It is useless to lie," cried the Bishop. "These coins are hundreds of years old. They are from some treasure-hold you would conceal from us. They are of the time of Decius."

"The time of Decius?" asked poor Malchus. "Is it not still his time? Where is the Emperor? But a few days ago we hid from his wrath."

"The man is mad," said the Governor. "Fellow, Decius has been dead these hundreds of years."

"No, no," said Malchus, "my comrades and I hid in the cave on Mt. Celion for fear of him, only yesterday; we were almost the last of the Christians alive in this city because of his persecution."

"This is a strange story," said the Bishop, "let us go out to the cave. Perhaps the hand of God is in it."

So the Bishop and the Governor and a

great number of people went out to the cave with Malchus, where they found the other six, in strange old garments but with the glow and vigor of youth and faith shining in their faces. So clear was the joy of the resurrection in their eyes that the people would have knelt and worshiped the seven, but they forbade them and glorified God.

The Bishop and the Governor sent messengers at once to Theodosius, the reigning Emperor, and he hurried to see them and worship with them.

"It is for the faith's sake that these men have lived to this day," he proclaimed.

"Believe in the Lord," said Maximian, "He has let us sleep without suffering for these centuries, that ye might know His power and glorify Him as we glorify Him."

Then the seven bowed their heads and their souls returned to their Maker.

The Emperor would have had their bodies cased in gold, but they appeared to him in a dream and told him that as they had slept on the earth, so in the earth they desired to

sleep until the Lord should waken them again. And as the Christians of medieval times looked up in the sky and saw the seven brilliant stars that circle around the North Star, they called them the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus in remembrance of this strange tale of faith and courage.

THE GREAT BEAR

The Lion and the Scorpion
They hide for half the year,
And then across the sky they run:
The Bear is always near.

The Lion and the Scorpion,
Upon all fours they go,
Their tails behind them, one by one,
So steady and so slow.

The Bear is sometimes on his back,
And sometimes on his knees;
He peeps above the chimney stack,
He hides behind the trees.

In summer, when it's daylight yet,
Long after you're in bed,
The Bear he turns a summerset
And stands upon his head.

When long before it's time for tea,
The light begins to fail,
The Bear, as any one can see,
Is balanced on his tail.

The Lion and the Scorpion
They glitter bright and fair:
Of all the stars behind the sun
The finest is the Bear.

JOHN HALSHAM

URSA MAJOR AND URSA MINOR

THE best known and most easily identified of all the constellations is that made by the seven bright stars that nightly circle around the North Star. Every race has given them a name and a story. We call them the dipper; the French, the Chariot of David, and sometimes the saucepan. The Chinese see it as a ladle or a corn measure, and they also hold it in awe as the Divinity of the North. The British see them as the Plow or as the wagon of Charlemagne, calling them Charles' Wain. The Welsh and Irish give the name of the Chariot of King Arthur to this constellation; the Italians call it the Car of Boötes, the Charioteer, who drives it as he walks behind; to the Scandinavians it is the goat-drawn chariot of Thor.

To many primitive men it was an animal, usually a bear, because like a bear it prowled

THE GREAT BEAR

around and around in a great circle; the Finns named it Otawa, the bear; to our own Iroquois, it was Okouari. The Algonquins saw the bear in the four stars of the Dipper's bowl, and the stars which form the handle were three hunters following the bear's tracks. In the middle ages it was shown to European children as one of the bears who ate up the wicked boys who mocked Elisha, though others said it was the

fiery chariot in which Elijah was whirled up into heaven. Still others called these stars the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, or the Seven Champions of Christendom.

The Great Bear as outlined by the Greeks, and still shown on star maps, includes not only the seven stars of the Dipper, but a number of others not quite so brilliant. The four stars of the bowl are the flank and shoulders of the bear, the handle forms the tail; seven other stars sprawling down from the left-hand corner of the bowl are the hind legs, and eight others on the right of the pointers outline the tip of the nose and the front legs.

The pointers by which the North Star is found are the two stars in the bowl at the side opposite the handle. The North Star is always as many degrees above the horizon as the observer is from the equator. It is the "ever-fixéd mark" upon which woodsmen and sailors rely as a guide. It marks the tip of the Little Bear's tail. The Little Bear, like the big one, is in the shape of a

Dipper. It is about half the size of the larger one and is turned in the opposite direction so that its body comes over its mother's tail.

ORION, THE GIANT HUNTSMAN

A GREEK LEGEND

ORION, son of Neptune, ruler of the Seven Seas, was mightiest of all the hunters upon the earth. He was the strongest man of his time; he was so tall that he could wade through deep waters, and he was handsomer than any of his fellows.

He was a good-natured man, as giants often are, for he feared no man and had many friends. But he had two enemies: Phœbus Apollo, whose beauty he almost rivaled; and Œnopion, King of Chios. Orion was so secure in his great strength that he suspected no treachery. One day Œnopion entertained him at a magnificent banquet and at the end of it, when Orion was relaxed and off his guard, had him blinded and cast him out alone into the forest.

Dizzy with pain, the blinded giant groped his way through the trees, which were as

thick underbrush would be to an ordinary man; the topmost branches struck his face, adding to his pain and confusion. As he wandered he heard the sound of a hammer striking against an anvil. So powerful were the blows that he felt sure the hammer was being wielded by one of the Cyclops.

Guided by the noise, he drew near the forge.

"Who labors here?" he called. "Orion, brother of Vulcan, mightiest of smiths, calls on you for aid."

To his joy, he was answered by his brother's voice. Vulcan rushed to his side, furious at his misfortune.

"Shall I seek out the evildoer?" He bellowed, "Shall I raze his palace to the ground?"

"Of what use were that?" said Orion. "Nay, let him alone. Give me one of your servants to be my guide. I shall soon be healed."

"Cedalion shall be your servant and

guide," said Vulcan calling Cedalion to them.

Orion bent down and lifted the man, who was but a pigmy beside him, to his shoulder.

"My legs shall take us on our way," he said; "you shall be my eyes. Tell me how to climb the nearest high mountain from the top of which may be seen the rising sun."

Cedalion watched closely and spoke the directions into Orion's ear, and the giant strode steadily on, covering miles where a man would have gone yards. All through the night they traveled, guided by the stars, and just before dawn they climbed through a narrow gorge and out upon the peak of the mountain just as the day was breaking. Orion turned his sightless eyes toward the East and the bright rays of the rising sun with their healing power touched them and once more Orion could see clearly. Full of joy he ran down the mountainside. Restoring Cedalion to his home with many thanks, he said farewell to Vulcan and plunging into

ORION TURNED HIS SIGHTLESS EYES TOWARD THE EAST

the sea swam toward his own home on the western shore.

Now Apollo was filled with anger that through no good will of his own he had brought health and happiness to his hated rival. Apollo's rays were always healing; even though he desired to do evil he could not bring death or destruction upon any one. He watched Orion speeding through the water. He was so far away that his head looked like a black ball bobbing up and down among the waves.

As Apollo looked down, his sister Diana, bow in hand, stood beside him. A crafty scheme popped into his mind.

"Ah, fair sister," he said, "it is long since I have seen your skill. How far can your arrows wing their way? Could you hit that round dark thing down there in the sea? But no, you would waste your arrow, it is too small and far away. It is moving too swiftly."

The heavenly huntress tossed her head. "That shining ball too far away, too small!"

she cried. "Often have I shot even smaller objects at a greater distance! Look!"

Even as she spoke, she fitted the arrow to the bow and drew the cord. The arrow flew straight to the mark, Orion floated upon the water—dead.

Now Diana's love for Orion had been as great as Apollo's hatred, and when she discovered what she had done, she was full of anger and deep grief. She wept with sorrow, then she called upon Jupiter to set Orion among the stars. This was done and if you look up into the sky on any clear winter night, he is still shining there, the largest and most gorgeous of all the constellations.

THE INDIAN HUNTER AND THE SEVEN DANCERS OF THE SKY

LONG ago, when there were very few red men and no white men at all in this country, there was a young warrior whose name was Elk. He and his uncle lived far away from the rest of their tribe in a pleasant glade of a forest bordered by a wide river. Great trees overhung the river except at one place where there was a broad sandy beach as smooth and level as a dancing floor.

Often the young brave would sleep and dream by the edge of the river. One night when the Hunting Moon was nearly full, he was awakened by soft music. There seemed to be seven lights dancing on the river. As he crept closer, screened by the trees, he saw that seven maidens were bathing; so silently did they slip in and out of the water that there was not even the sound of a splash. After they had bathed they came out upon

the beach and danced in the moonlight. Elk watched them breathlessly, for they were more beautiful than any of the Indian maidens he had ever seen, and the youngest of the seven was the most beautiful. As he watched, a basket of woven reeds descended from the sky, the dancers sprang into it and it was drawn up so quickly that as Elk turned his head he saw them in the eastern sky as seven dancing stars.

So great had been their loveliness that Elk could think of nothing else and the next night he hid himself again in the bushes by the river's edge. Just as the full moon lighted the water, he saw the wicker basket swing out over the river and the maidens slipped out of it. Again they were as flames dancing on the river. When once more they danced upon the silvery sands, Elk crept closer and closer to them; the youngest sister danced almost beside him and he sprang out to catch her. In an instant all was confusion, the sisters were in a panic as they ran

from him. But before he could touch one of them, the basket had been lowered, they were in it and it was drawn away from the earth and the starry dancers were once more in the sky.

The young hunter was disconsolate. Nightly he watched the river and sky. The leaves turned to brilliant reds and yellows and faded and fell to the ground; the Snow Moon waxed and waned. The Dancing Maidens danced gayly up the Sky Trail from East to West, each night higher and higher, brighter and brighter, never touching the earth.

When the pale green leaves began to flutter out like myriads of green butterflies, and the drifts of pink and white blossom on laurel and dogwood made beautiful the forest, Elk saw that the Dancing Stars were coming nearer the western edge of the river. Each night he hid himself in the reeds. At length, after many moons, the basket swung down again and the maidens dropped over its edge into the water. When they came

SHE FORGOT ALL ELSE AND LET GO OF THE BASKET

out upon the sand he saw that their beauty was even greater than his memory of it. He watched them so eagerly that the hours passed by in a flash, and he was amazed to see the basket descending for them. As they stepped into it he dashed out, just in time to catch the youngest sister's girdle. The basket rose with them and the youngest dancer looked to see what it was that held her. When her eyes met Elk's, she forgot all else and let go of the basket and floated gently to the earth with him.

"What do you want of me?" she asked.

"Long have I watched you and your sisters," he answered, "and since I have seen you, no Indian maiden has beauty in my eyes. I want you for my wife."

"I shall be your wife," she said, "and dwell in your lodge. First, however, we must go to the house of the Sun, my father, for our wedding feast."

The youth agreed and the basket descended to them and they were drawn up into the land of the sky.

Elk was made welcome in the great lodge of the chieftain of the sky. The Sun himself bade him lie down, and rubbed him with some strange ointment and bathed him in bright rays, until his skin glowed and his muscles had new strength. A royal feast was spread; he danced ceremonial dances with the sky people; and hunted over the wide plains of the heavens. No matter what he did, he was never weary and daily his strength grew greater.

Several moons went by and Elk began to think of his old uncle whom he had left alone by the river. He began to long for his own people. He wished to use his new vigor hunting in his own forest. The basket was prepared and once again swung silently down to the river. But when they reached the ground Elk was dismayed and astonished; though he thought he had been absent but a short time, all was changed. Where his uncle's lonely wigwam had stood there were now many lodges, long houses with the smoke of many fires above the roofs. Men

and women and children moved about. Canoes glided from shore to shore.

When Elk and his beautiful squaw stepped from the basket they were surrounded by the villagers, who marveled at their strength and beauty and at their robes of deep blue spangled with stars of wampum.

"Where is my uncle?" asked the bewildered Elk. "Where is my lodge?"

The strangers shook their heads. "We have lived here for many moons, and our fathers and their fathers were here before us."

Some of the oldest men remembered having heard from their fathers, who had first built the long house by the river, that when they came to this spot they had found an old, old Indian sorrowing over the mysterious disappearance of his nephew. Gradually Elk realized that the time, which had passed so quickly in the sky, had been not a few, but many, many moons, more than the span of a man's life.

The Indians begged him to dwell among

them and treated him with great honor and respect, but they were not of his tribe and their ways were strange; after a little he and his wife went back to the sky. To this day you may see the seven starry dancers twinkling in the winter sky; six shine clearly but the seventh is dim for Elk's wife lost her brightness by living on the earth. Elk can also be seen, the mighty huntsman of the sky, with his hunting dogs, ever following the shining maidens whose radiance drew him from the river and the forests of his own land.

This is the story the Indian grandmothers of many tribes tell the boys and girls as they look up at the constellations which we call Orion and the Pleiades.

ORION

OF all the constellations, the most strikingly beautiful is that of Orion as it shines early on wintry evenings in the southeastern sky. So brilliant is it that the ancients thought of it as rivaling the sun itself.

The three evenly spaced stars which form Orion's belt make it very easy to identify the whole constellation, as there are no other stars in the whole sky grouped in at all the same way. Astronomers use them as a yardstick, exactly three degrees long, to measure distances from star to star. Hanging obliquely from the belt, and veiled in a great nebula, are the three stars of the giant's sword. An enormous oblong, the corners marked by four bright stars, outlines his body. Two of these, Betelgeuse and Rigel, are among the twenty brightest stars of the sky. Betelgeuse, an orange-red star, is in the right shoulder, and diagonally opposite

ORION

is the even larger, bluish-white Rigel, marking the left foot, which is raised to the level of the right knee, as the hunter climbs toward Taurus, the bull. The left shoulder is indicated by Bellatrix, also known as the Amazon, and Saiph, slightly smaller, is in the right knee. From Bellatrix a curve of

smaller stars form the lionskin that is thrown over the huntsman's left arm, while a line of stars going upward from Betelgeuse almost to the Twins, outline his right arm and uplifted club. Orion is followed from East to West by his huge hunting dogs; Procyon the smaller one, is almost on a line with his shoulders; and Sirius, blazing in the head of the larger, is unmistakable, as it is the brightest of all the fixed stars.

Nearly all primitive star-gazers saw a mighty hunter in this constellation. Some knew it as the Nimrod of the Bible. The Chinese called it the White Tiger. The Eskimos thought the three stars of the belt three steps cut in a great celestial snowdrift. The Latin races, seeing it overhead at Epiphany, still call these stars the Three Kings, and the veiled stars of the sword are the Three Marys.

CANIS MAJOR

The great Overdog,
That heavenly beast
With a star in one eye,
Gives a leap in the East.

He dances upright
All the way to the West,
And never once drops
On his forefeet to rest.

I am a poor Underdog
But to-night I will bark,
With the great Overdog
That romps through the dark.

ROBERT FROST

THE SEVEN BROTHERS OF THE STAR CLUSTER

A SENECA MYTH

SEVEN brothers had been trained as young warriors. Each day they practiced in front of their mother's lodge, but they did not please their mother. With the boys was their uncle whose custom it was to sit outside the lodge and drum upon the water drum, so they might learn to dance correctly.

In time the boys became perfect in their dancing and then announced that they were about to depart on an expedition to test their skill. The seven assembled about the war post and began their dance. They then went to their mother's lodge and asked her to supply them with dried meat and parched corn for their journey, but she sent them away, scoffing at their presumption.

Again they danced and again they re-

THE SEVEN BROTHERS

turned for food. "I will not give you so much as a small cake of corn bread," said the mother, hoping to restrain them. Again they danced. A third time they returned for food and a third time were they refused it.

The fourth dance began and the eldest brother changed the tune and began to sing the magic song of Djihaya. With such enthusiasm did he sing that all the others

joined in and as they sang they were compelled to dance a dance of magic.

The mother heard the weird music and rushed out of the lodge; to her amazement the boys were dancing, not on the ground but high in the air. She was greatly startled.

"Return, my sons," she cried. "What manner of departure is this?"

But the song continued and the boys rose higher and higher.

Again the mother cried out, "Oh, my eldest son, will you not hear your mother's voice, will you not come back to me?" But the eldest son danced on with the others, though his heart was touched. Again the mother screamed to him, "Oh, my son, will you not hear me? Only look down upon me!" So piteous was her cry that the eldest son's heart was very much touched but he would not look down for fear of weakening his brothers.

"Oh, my brothers," he called, "heed no sounds from the earth but continue dancing.

If you look down you shall fall and nevermore be able to dance."

The mother now gave a heartbroken cry and called, "Oh, my first-born son, give your mother one look or I die!" This weakened the heart of the oldest son and he looked down toward the figure of his mother with outstretched arms, weeping for him.

As he looked he lost his power to master the air, and began to fall. With great rapidity he fell until he struck the earth and penetrated it, leaving only a scar where the earth came together again.

The mother rushed to the spot where he had fallen and swept the dead leaves away from it, but no trace of her son could she find. Looking up she saw the other sons dancing far up in the sky. They had become the "dancing stars" which we call the Pleiades.

In deep sorrow the mother with covered head sat beside the spot where her first-born had fallen. For a whole year she wept as she watched.

Winter came and the dancing boys appeared over the council lodge and each night were observed overhead, but there was no sign of the eldest.

Spring came again and the time of budding plants. From the place where the eldest brother had disappeared a tiny green shoot appeared. The mother watched it with great solicitude. It grew into a tall tree, the first pine tree. This tree was guarded by the melancholy old woman and she would allow no man to touch it.

The winds blew and the tree swayed, it began to speak, and the mother heard. Only she could interpret the sounds that came from its swaying branches; only she could see the face of the young warrior and his waving plumes.

A careless hunter slashed the tree but the mother bound up its wounds. In time the tree grew cones and dropped them into the earth, and more trees grew and gave their pitch to make strong and tight the canoes of the tribe.

Every winter the pine tree grew taller and straighter reaching up toward its dancing brothers and to the mother the eldest son was her comfort as she rested on the earth.

ARTHUR PARKER

THE PLEIADES

ALTHOUGH one of the smallest of the constellations, containing no stars of first magnitude, the six stars visible to the average human eye twinkle so brightly in their nebulous veil, that they have caught the imagination of the weavers of tales of many races, and the Pleiades are the most storied of constellations.

In the autumn and winter skies, they dance nightly across the heavens northwest of the mighty giant Orion. Taurus, the bull, is between them; a straight line drawn from Betelgeuse, the great orange-red star in Orion's right shoulder, to the Pleiades will pass through Aldebaran, the great red star which forms the eye of the bull. The Pleiades are part of the constellation of Taurus; they are on his right shoulder.

The Greeks as well as the Indians thought

of them as dancers. Their number is sometimes given as seven, sometimes as eleven, but the telescope reveals seven thousand stars. The Greeks gave them the names of the seven daughters of Atlas: Alcyone, Electra, Maia, Taygeta, Asterope, Celaeno, and Merope. Merope, as in the Indian story, married a mortal, thus dimming her brilliance.

The Arabs called them a herd of camels; the Eskimos, a team of dogs in pursuit of a bear; the Spaniards, seven nanny-goats; the Italians, a battledore.

In some ancient religions they were connected with worship. They reach their culmination, that is, touch the highest point overhead, on November seventeenth at midnight, so November is often called the Pleiade-month. Because so often at this time of year the rains have ceased and the weather is bright and sunny, neither too hot nor too cold, great festivals were held in their honor. In Japan it is the time of the

Feast of Lanterns, in ancient Persia the great Festival of Isis was begun on the seventeenth of November and on that day no petition was presented in vain to the King of Kings. The Pleiades were connected with worship in Egypt; the Greeks' great temple, the Parthenon, was oriented upon them; and the greatest of British "tors," Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, was the seat of the Druids' worship of them. To the Hindus they were divine flame.

The poets of all ages have sung of them. Job, in the Bible, asks, "Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades?" and Amos says, "Seek Him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, the Lord is His name."

An Oriental poet speaks of "the hour when the Pleiades appeared in the firmament like the folds of a silken sash variously decked with gems"; and another says it is "as though the tops of the trees were encircled by the necklace of the Pleiades." Chaucer and Milton allude to "Atlantes'

doughtres sevene" and "the Seven Atlantic Sisters," Keats, to the "Starry Seven, old Atlas' children." Tennyson calls them a "swarm of fireflies tangled in a silver braid"; Edgar Allan Poe speaks of the "Pleiads that are seven"; and Bayard Taylor refers to them as a "swarm of golden bees."

Fiona Macleod (William Sharp) in his prose that is true poetry, says: "What ages, what rise and fall of kingdoms and great empires, since the Arabian shepherd looked up from the illimitable desert and called this dim cluster, this incalculable congregation of majesty and splendor, Al Najm, 'the Constellation' . . . *'the* Constellation'; since the first wandering Bedouins halted in the moonlit Sahara to bow before Al Wasat, the Central One; since the poets of the Zend-Avesta hailed the overlordship of the Holy Seven! And yet they still rise, and set, changeless, mysterious. Still the old wonder, the old reverence lives . . . for not long ago I heard a tale told by a Gaelic story-

teller who spoke of the Pleiades as the Seven Friends of Christ, and named them as Love, Purity, Courage, Tenderness, Faith, Joy, and Peace."

PHAËTON, WHO SOUGHT TO DRIVE THE CHARIOT OF THE SUN

A GREEK MYTH

IN one of the temples of Arcadia there lived, with his mother Clymene, a handsome youth named Phaëton. He had never seen his father face to face but Clymene had told him that he was the son of the great Phœbus Apollo who daily drove the chariot of the sun across the sky.

One day as Phaëton played with a companion, Epaphus, they quarreled as Phaëton boasted of his lofty parentage.

"How do you know he is your father?" the other boy demanded tauntingly. "This is but an idle tale. Does he visit you? Have you ever talked with him? I would want proof before I believed such a story!"

Indignantly Phaëton rushed to his mother beseeching her to give him proof of his proud assertions.

"By the splendor of the sun, itself," she answered, "I swear to you that you are sprung from the glorious one who daily lights the world. You are nearly a man; go seek him out. His rising place is not far from here. Go to him and ask him if he does not claim you as son."

Filled with joy and excitement, the boy could scarcely wait to set out, and was soon on his way toward the palace of the sun. He traveled swiftly. When he reached the palace, its magnificence was so great that he hesitated to enter. It stood on high columns of dazzling gold and bronze, its roof was of ivory. Its great double doors were of burnished silver, and the carvings upon them were more beautiful than ivory or silver or gold. These carvings set forth pictures of the beauty of both land and sea, and above them was the sky, with six signs of the zodiac on the right-hand door and six on the left.

His hesitation was only for a moment; then

he boldly climbed the steep path leading to the palace and entered the hall. Phœbus, in a deep purple robe, sat upon a throne studded with emeralds, on each side of him stood Day and Month and Year and Century, and the Hours from rosy Dawn to shadowy Eve, with Noon in brilliant yellow. Spring was there wreathed in flowers; Summer, garlanded with ripe wheat; Autumn with grape leaves in her hair and arms laden with fruit; Winter, too, with hoary locks. Again the boy paused, half afraid and half blinded with the radiance of the mighty Phœbus. But the father's heart swelled with pride at the sight of his tall and handsome son; laying aside his dazzling crown of light, he called him to his side.

"Truly thou art a son to make glad the heart of a father," he said. "Why hast thou sought me?"

"I have come," said Phaëton, "to beg thee to give me some proof that thou art my father. I have been taunted with having no

father. Give me some proof that I am really thy child, that no one dare question it again."

"Ask of me what thou wilt," said Apollo; "any boon thou desirest thou mayest have. I swear to thee by the Stygian pool, which my eyes are too bright to behold, thy deepest desire shall be given to thee."

"Let me drive the chariot of the sun across the sky," cried the boy.

"Alas!" said his father, "do not ask that! I cannot take back my promise, but I beg thee to ask something that is possible for thy age and strength. No mortal could drive my horses. I, alone of the immortals, can handle their reins. The road is steep and high. I, myself, in highest heaven tremble when I look down and see the earth and sea so far below. The whirling stars make me dizzy. There are strange beasts to be passed; the bull, the bears, the lion, the scorpion and the crab. Choose wealth or lands, ask me for anything in sea or earth or sky, but not for the chariot!"

But Phaëton had chosen; he burned with a great longing to show not only men but Phœbus, himself, that he was truly his own son in courage and daring.

At last his father yielded and led the boy to the chariot which Vulcan had made. Phaëton stared at it in astonishment at its beauty; the pole, the axle, the tires of the wheels were of gold, the spokes were of silver, and the yoke was set with chrysolites and precious jewels. As he looked at it, Aurora, who watches the dawn, threw open her purple gates, and the stars wheeled and fled before her rosy light. As the slender horns of the waning moon faded away, and the Hours swiftly yoked the horses to the golden car, Apollo again pleaded with his son to give up his mad ambition, but when the boy insisted, he placed the reins in his hands and warned him to follow the beaten tracks of his wheels, going neither too far to the North or the South but holding a middle course.

Phaëton, glowing with excitement and

pride, stood in the chariot, reins in hand, thanking his father, eager to be off. The impatient horses whinnied and pawed the ground, tossing their fiery manes. Then the bars were lowered and they dashed forth. But the weight of the chariot was so much lighter than usual that it rolled from side to side like a ship in ballast. The horses, realizing that strange hands held their reins, began to run wild. The young driver tried to keep them on the beaten track; he became panic-stricken as they paid no heed to his tugs at the reins. He grew pale with fear, everywhere in the sky he saw strange figures; the bull beset his path, the fierce lion turned his frightened horses off at another tangent; the bears and the dragon who are always about the icy pole for the first time felt intense heat and strove vainly to escape from it. Boötes, though slow of movement and hampered by his clumsy ox-cart, fled in terror. When Phaëton saw the greatest terror of all, the scorpion with long curling tail, and arms curved like two bows, reeking

with black poisonous sweat, his fear was so great that the reins fell from his hands.

When the horses felt the reins idle upon their backs, they became wilder than ever. They rushed madly about dragging the chariot first up, then down, above the highest clouds and then almost touching the earth. The mountain forests were soon ablaze. Meadows were a mass of white ashes. It is said that it was at this time that the people of Ethiopia became black, scorched by the sun. The rivers dried up. The Rhone, the Rhine, the Ganges, the Po, the Tiber, boiled between their banks; the seven mouths of the Nile were dry and filled with dust. The chariot burned beneath Phaëton's feet, he was blinded by the whirling sparks and the dense black smoke that enveloped him.

Even the oceans shrank from their shores, Neptune and the sea nymphs could not raise their heads out of the water because of the intense heat. Only Mother Earth, though parched and worn, managed to lift up her head and call upon Jupiter to save his uni-

CYGNUS THE SWAN WITH THE NORTHERN CROSS

verse while there was yet time. The ruler of earth and sky heard her cry, swiftly he balanced a streak of lightning in his right hand, and hurled it at the hapless Phaëton. The horses leapt apart, the chariot was strewn far and wide. Like a shooting star, Phaëton, his hair aflame, fell far from his own land to the shores of the westernmost river, Eridanus.

Great was the grief of all who loved him. Cygnus, his friend, forsook his kingdom and roamed sadly along the water's edge, mourning so bitterly that the immortals took pity upon him and changed him into a strange new bird, the swan. Sad was his mother, Clymene; sadder still his father who for days refused to shine upon the earth because of his deep sorrow.

In the winter sky, just to the west of Rigel in Orion, the River Eridanus may still be seen; and Cygnus with widespread wings and outstretched neck flies through the Milky Way; the lion, the crab, the bears, the dragon, Boötes, and the scorpion, are there too; Phœbus Apollo drives his steeds across the heavens each day. But Phaëton never regained the sky. The naiades buried him on the edge of the western lands under a tomb of marble, and engraved upon it a verse, in sorrow for his untimely end, but in admiration of him because he dared to strive for higher things than he could accomplish.

RETOLD FROM OVID

PEACE ON EARTH

The Archer is wake!
The Swan is flying!
Gold against blue
An arrow is lying.
There is hunting in heaven—
Sleep safe till to-morrow.

The Bears are abroad!
The Eagle is screaming!
Gold against blue
Their eyes are gleaming!
Sleep!
Sleep safe till morning.

The Sisters lie
With their arms intertwining
Gold against blue
Their hair is shining!
The Serpent writhes!
Orion is listening!
Gold against blue
His sword is glistening!
Sleep!
There is hunting in heaven—
Sleep safe till morning.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

THE STAR LOVERS

THE JAPANESE LEGEND OF VEGA THE WEAVING MAIDEN AND ALTAIR THE HERD BOY

ALL you that are true lovers, I beseech you pray the Gods for fair weather upon the seventh night of the seventh moon.

For patience's sake and for dear love's sake, pray and be pitiful that upon that night there may be neither rain, nor hail, nor cloud, nor thunder, nor creeping mist.

Hear the sad tale of the Star Lovers and give them your prayers.

The Weaving Maiden was the daughter of the Deity of Light. Her dwelling was upon the shore of the Milky Way which is the Bright River of Heaven. All day long she sat at her loom and plied her shuttle, weaving the gay garments of the Gods. Warp and woof, hour by hour, the colored web grew, till it lay fold on fold, piled at her feet.

Courtesy of Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London.

Still she never ceased her labor for she was afraid. She had heard a saying: "Sorrow, age-long sorrow shall come upon the Weaving Maiden when she leaves her loom."

So she labored and the Gods had garments to spare. But she herself, poor maiden, was ill clad; she recked nothing of the attire or of the jewels that her father gave her. She went barefoot, and let her hair hang down unconfined. Ever and anon a long lock fell upon the loom and back she flung it over her shoulder. She did not play with the Children of Heaven nor take pleasure with the Celestial Youths and Maidens. She did not love or weep. She was neither glad nor sorry. She sat weaving, weaving . . . and wove her being into the many colored webs.

Now her father, the Deity of Light, grew angry.

He said, "Daughter, you weave too much!"

"It is my duty," she said.

"At your age to talk of duty!" said her father. "Out upon you!"

"Wherefore are you displeased with me, my father?" she said and her fingers plied the shuttle.

"Are you a stock or a stone, or a pale flower by the wayside?"

"Nay," she said, "I am none of these."

"Then leave your loom, my child, and live. Take pleasure, be as others are."

"And wherefore should I be as others are?" she said.

"Never dare to question me. Come, leave your loom!"

She said: "Sorrow, age-long sorrow, shall come to the Weaving Maiden when she leaves her loom."

"A foolish saying," cried her father, "not worthy of credence. What do we know of sorrow? Are we not Gods?" With that he took her shuttle from her hand gently, and covered the loom with a cloth. And he caused her to be very richly attired, and they put jewels upon her, and garlanded her head

with flowers of Paradise. And her father gave her for spouse the Herd Boy of the Heavens, who tended his flocks upon the banks of the Bright River.

Now the Maiden was changed indeed. Her eyes were stars and her lips were ruddy. She went dancing and singing all the day. Long hours she played with the Children of Heaven, and she took her pleasures with the Celestial Youths and Maidens. Lightly she went; her feet were shod with silver. Her lover, the Herd Boy, held her by the hand. She laughed so that the very Gods laughed with her, and high Heaven reëchoed with sounds of mirth. She was careless; little did she think of duty or the garments of the Gods. As for her loom she never went near it from one moon's end to the other.

"I have my life to live," she said; "I'll weave it into a web no longer."

And the Herd Boy, her lover, clasped her in his arms. Her face was all tears and smiles, and she hid it on his breast. So she

lived her life. But her father, the Deity of Light, was angry.

"It is too much," he said. "Is the girl mad? She will become the laughingstock of Heaven. Besides who is to weave the new spring garments of the Gods?"

Three times he warned his daughter.

Three times she laughed and softly shook her head.

"Your hand opened the door, my father," she said, "but of a surety no hand either of God or mortal can close it."

He said, "You will find it otherwise to your cost." And he banished the Herd Boy forever and ever to the farther side of the Bright River. The magpies flew together, from far and near, and spread their frail wings for a bridge across the river, and the Herd Boy went across the frail bridge. And immediately the magpies flew away to the ends of the earth and the Weaving Maiden could not follow. She was the saddest thing in Heaven. Long, long she stood upon the shore, and held out her arms to the Herd

Boy, who tended his oxen, desolate and in tears. Long, long she brooded, looking on the ground.

She rose and went to her loom. She cast aside the cloth that covered it. She took the shuttle in her hand.

"Age-long sorrow," she said, "age-long sorrow!" Presently she dropped her shuttle. "Ah," she moaned, "the pain of it." And she leaned her head upon the loom.

But in a little while she said, "Yet I would not be as I once was. I did not love or weep. I was neither glad nor sorry. Now I love and I weep—I am glad and I am sorry."

Her tears fell like rain, but she took up the shuttle and labored diligently, weaving the garments of the Gods. Sometimes the web was gray with grief, sometimes it was rosy with dreams. The Gods were fain to go strangely clad. The maiden's father, the Deity of Light, for once was well pleased.

"That is my good diligent child," he said; "now you are quiet and happy?"

ON THE SEVENTH NIGHT OF THE SEVENTH MOON
CAME THE MAGPIES

"The quiet of dark despair," she said. "Happy! I am the saddest thing in Heaven."

"I am sorry," said the Deity of Light. "What shall I do?"

"Give me back my lover."

"Nay, child, that I cannot do. He is banished forever and ever by the decree of a Deity, that cannot be broken."

"I knew it!" she said.

"Yet something I can do. Listen. On the seventh day of the seventh moon, I will summon the magpies together from the ends of the earth, and they shall build a bridge over the Bright River of Heaven, so that the Weaving Maiden shall lightly cross to the waiting Herd Boy on the opposite shore."

So it was. On the seventh day of the seventh moon came the magpies from far and near. They spread their wings for a frail bridge. The Weaving Maiden went over by the frail bridge. Her eyes were like stars and her heart was like a bird in her

breast. And the Herd Boy was there to meet her on the farther shore.

And so it is still, oh, true lovers. Upon the seventh day of the seventh moon these two keep their tryst. Only if rain falls with thunder and cloud and hail, and the Bright River of Heaven is swollen and swift, the magpies cannot make a bridge for the Weaving Maiden. Alack, the dreary time.

Therefore true lovers pray the Gods for fair weather.

GRACE JAMES

THE DIVINE MUSICIAN

NORTHWEST of the Ægean, where the cliffs of Pelion rise sheer out of the sea, dwelt long ago Cheiron, the centaur, the wisest of living things, half man, half horse. He knew all manner of strange things; he could prophesy, and play upon the lyre, and cure men of their hurts by means of healing herbs. He was gentle and mild, yet withal brave, and had been in many a bloody fight, and knew the arts of war full well as the arts of peace. The Greeks called him Cheiron, the Craftsman, and sent their sons to live with him in the hollow cave on the mountainside where he had his home, that they might be taught all the things which man should know. Far, far above the cave the snow-capped peaks of Pelion kept watch over the towns of the plain, and far, far below, the waves of the Ægean washed

From the *Children of the Dawn*, by Elsie Finnimore Buckley. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

without ceasing the rocks of the pitiless coast, sometimes soft and soothing as a mother sings to her child, and then loud and boisterous beneath the lash of the storm-wind, when the seabirds fly screaming to the shelter of the shore. All about were dark forests of chestnut, pine, and oak, where many a fierce beast had his lair. In the branches of the trees the wild birds built their nests and filled the dark glades with song. About the mouth of the cave the ground was trampled hard beneath the tread of many feet and paths led this way and that, some to the heart of the forests, others down steep cliffs to the shore.

Every morning at sunrise a troop of boys and youths would come forth from the cave, and, dividing into groups, would go their several ways to fish or to hunt, or follow the course of some stream to its unknown source in the mountains. Sometimes Cheiron himself would go with them, if he thought they had need of his help; but more

often he left them to their own devices, to follow each one his own bent as nature prompted him. In the evening they would come home and tell him of their doings in the day; and he would praise or blame them, according as they had done good or ill and show them how they might do better another time. Then they would go to their couches of dried mosses and leaves and sleep the deep sleep of youth and health, while the cool night wind blew in upon their faces from the mouth of the cave, and put fresh life and strength into their tired limbs.

In the wintertime, when the night was longer than the day, and the snow lay deep upon the hills, they would light a fire in front of the cave with logs they had stored in the summer months, and Cheiron would take his lyre and sing to them of all things in heaven and earth, while they lay round about and listened. The songs which he sang to them they never forgot, because Cheiron was wise and spoke to their souls in his singing. So they laid up his songs in their

hearts; and many a long year after, when they were grown men and far away, and some danger or difficulty stood in their path, the drift of his teaching would come back to them in the words of a song, and their hearts would grow brave and strong once more to act worthily of their boyhood's sunny days on Pelion.

Many a hero whose name still lives among men had been trained by Cheiron and not least among them the greatest of Greek musicians and mystics, Orpheus, whose lyre shines still in the summer skies.

One day, at even, Cheiron stood at the mouth of the cave watching for the lads to come home. Sooner than he expected he saw one of them far away coming down a path from the mountains, and he marveled that he should return so soon and alone. As he came nearer Cheiron saw that he walked with his eyes upon the ground, deep in thought. Every now and then he stopped and looked upon the peaceful hillsides stretching calm and smiling in the golden

glow of the evening; and when he had gazed for a moment he sighed, as though he would breathe into his soul the beauty he saw around him, and then walked on once more with his eyes upon the ground. So he walked until he saw Cheiron standing in the entrance of the cave, then he ran to him and put his hand upon his shoulder.

"My father," he cried, "look upon the hills; hast thou ever seen them so fair as they have been to-day?"

Cheiron smiled at his words.

"Orpheus," he said, "the fair face of the earth changes but little. In the soul of man it lies to look upon her and see her beauty or to be blind."

"Till this day I have been blind, Cheiron," he said.

"And who has lifted the veil from thine eyes, my son?" asked his master.

"I know not," he said, "but this morning, while it was yet dark, there came to me a strange unrest and a longing to be alone. So I crept out of the cave while all the others

still slept, and climbed up the mountainside —up, up, in the gray light before dawn, till I came to a place where the white snow lies like a cloak on the shaggy shoulders of Pelion. There I left the track of my footsteps where no feet but mine had trod, and climbed up upon a bowlder and looked out across the sea. And I saw the great sun rise out of the east. As I looked it seemed as if I beheld the face of God; and as the snow and the sea and the forests awoke to life in the light of His glory, my soul awoke within me. And all day long I wandered about the forests and hills; and I saw the beauty of the trees and the grass, and the grace of the wild deer as he bounded over the rocks, as I had never seen it before. The wonder of this day lies like a burden on my heart that I fain would ease, yet I have no words to tell of it."

Then Cheiron took up the lyre which was lying by his side and passed his fingers gently over the strings.

"Orpheus," he said, "many a long year

ago, when thou wast a little lad, thy mother, Calliope, brought thee to me. And she put thy hand into mine and said, 'Cheiron, make a man of my son. Make him brave and fearless and strong, a worthy companion of the noble lads thou hast around thee. When the right time comes I will breathe my spirit upon him, and he shall be great, as few in the world are great.' This day she has kept her word, Orpheus. She has breathed her spirit upon thee and has opened the eyes of thy soul and made them see."

"Who is my mother Calliope?" asked the boy.

"She is the fair-voiced one of the Muses, who speaks through the lips of mortals by music and song. All knowledge, all music of sound and words, comes to men through the gifts of the nine great sisters, the Muses. Happy art thou to be her son. Take now this lyre from my hand. Ease the burden of thy soul in song, and learn how great is the gift she has given thee."

THE CREATURES LAY SPELLBOUND AROUND HIM

So Orpheus took the lyre from his master, and struck the chords, as all lads who dwelt with Cheiron knew well how to do. But instead of the old songs that he had learnt from his childhood, a new song came to his lips and he sang as he had never sung before. Far away upon the hillsides his companions heard his voice, and they stopped on their homeward way to listen, as the evening breeze bore the sound to their ears. When they knew that the voice came from home they hastened on and drew silently near, that no sound might disturb the singer, and throwing themselves on the ground at his feet, forgot their weariness and hunger as they listened. On and on he sang, forgetful of all else but his song, till the red glow of evening died away in the West and the stars shone pale in the twilight. There was a strange magic in his music which drew all living things to his feet, as a magnet draws the cold heart of steel. From the woods and forests they came and from the bare hillsides—the lion, the leopard, and the

trembling faun. The snake came forth from his hiding place, the rabbit from his hole, and the wild birds wheeled about his head and settled on the brow of the cave. The very trees seemed to hear him, as they swayed their heads to and fro to the rhythm of his song.

As he looked round upon his comrades whilst he sang, his heart grew strong within him, for he felt that a strange new power had been born in his soul, which could bow the heads of men beneath his will as the wind bows the rushes by the stream. So he sang on as the twilight deepened into night, and all the stars of heaven came forth to listen, till at length his song died upon his lips, like a breeze lulled to rest at sunset. For a minute the creatures lay spellbound around him; then one by one they crept back to their homes, with their fears and their hatreds tamed for a while by the magic of his singing. And his companions crowded around him with words of praise and eager questions.

"Who taught thee thy magic song, Orpheus?" they cried.

"The sunrise and the snow," he answered, "and the teaching of Cheiron, and my happy days with you, and the spirit of my mother, Calliope—all these have taught me my song."

But his answer was a dark saying to them and not one of them understood it except Cheiron. He knew that it is the commonest things in life that are the material for all that is beautiful and fair, just as a temple may be built of common stone; but that the children of the Muses are few, who can by music and art open the blind hearts of men to see.

Thus did the gift of song fall upon Orpheus, so that he became the greatest of all singers upon earth. All day long he would wander about the woods and the hills, and tame the heart of every living thing with the magic of his voice.

One day he came to a wood where he had never been before, and he followed a grass-

grown track which led to the mouth of a cave. On one side of the cave stood a tall beech-tree, whose moss-covered roots offered a tempting seat, and close by a clear stream gushed forth from the rocks. He drank eagerly of the water, for he had wandered far and was thirsty; when he had quenched his thirst, he sat down on the roots of the beech-tree and began his song. As before, the wild things gathered about him, and crouched at his feet, tame and silent, as he sang; and from the shadow of the cave crept a wood-nymph, and lay upon the grass, with her chin between her hands, looking up into his face. For a time he did not see her, so silently had she come; but at last the power of her eyes drew his eyes upon her, and he turned his head and looked at her. When he saw her, his arm fell useless at his side and his voice died away in his throat, for he had never looked upon any one so fair. Her hair was black as a storm-cloud, but her eyes were blue as the summer sky, and she lay like a white flower in the grass at

his feet. For a long time he gazed into her face without speaking, as she gazed back at him, and at last he spoke.

"Who art thou, maiden?" he asked.

"I am Eurydice," she answered.

"Thy hair is black as midnight, Eurydice," he said, "and thine eyes are bright as the noonday."

"Are not noonday and midnight fair to thine eyes?" she asked.

"They are fair indeed, but thou art fairer."

"Then I am well content," she said.

"I know not thy name or thy race, Eurydice," said he, "but my heart beats with thy heart as if we were not strangers."

"When two hearts beat together, Orpheus, they are strangers no more, whether they have known each other all their days or have met as thou and I have met. Long ago the fame of thee and of thy singing, reached mine ears, but I hardened my heart against thee and said, 'It is an idle rumor, and he is no better than other men before whose

face I flee.' But now the Gods have brought thy steps to the hollow cave where I dwell, and thou by the magic of thy music, hast drawn me to thy feet, so that I, who doubted thy power, must follow thee wheresoever thou wilt."

"Shall I sing thee a song, Eurydice—the song thou hast sown in my heart?"

"Yes, sing me that song," she answered.

So he struck the chords of his lyre and sang her the song that was born of her beauty. One by one the wild creatures stole back to the forest, for that song was not for them, and the two were left alone beneath the spreading boughs of the beech-tree. As he sang, Eurydice crept closer to him, till her head rested on his knee and her long black hair fell in a cloud about his feet. And as she drew nearer his voice became lower, till it became but a whisper in her ear. Then he laid his lyre on the ground beside him and put his arms around her, and their hearts spoke to each other in the tongue that knows not sound nor words.

So it came to pass that Orpheus returned no more to dwell with Cheiron and his companions in the hollow cave below Pelion, but lived with Eurydice, his wife, in her cave in the heart of the forest. But he never forgot his boyhood days or what Cheiron had done for him. He would go often to see him and take counsel with him and sing to the boys his magic song. For a few short years he lived a life that the Gods might envy, till the dark days came, when not even music could bring comfort to his heart. For one day, as he roamed with Eurydice through the dark forest, it chanced that unwittingly she trod upon a serpent, and the creature turned upon her and pierced her white foot with its venomous fang. Like liquid fire the poison ran through her veins, and she lay faint and dying in his arms.

"Eurydice, Eurydice," he cried, "open thine eyes and come back to me."

For a minute the agony of his voice awoke her to life.

"Orpheus," she said, "my beloved, this side of the river of death we can dwell together no longer. But love is stronger than death, and some day our love shall prevail, never again to be conquered."

Then her head sank upon her breast, and her spirit fled to return no more. So he bore the fair image of his wife in his arms to the cave that had been their home. Above her head he placed a great pine torch and all the long night he sat beside her and his heart groaned within him with a grief too great for words. When the day dawned he kissed her for the last time and laid her head back on a pillow of moss and leaves. Then he pulled down the earth and stones about the mouth of the cave, so that no one might find the opening, and left forever the home he had loved so well. He walked in the gray light of dawn, little caring where he went, and struck the chords of his lyre to tell all the earth of his grief. The trees and the flowers bowed down their heads as they listened, the clouds of heaven dropped

tears upon the ground, and the whole world mourned with Orpheus for the death of Eurydice, his wife.

"Sleep no more, ye woods and forests," he sang, "sleep no more, toss your arms in the sighing wind, and bow your heads beneath the sky that weeps with me. For Eurydice is dead. She is dead. No more shall her white feet glance through the grass, nor the field flowers shine in her hair. But, like last year's snow, she is melted away and my heart is desolate without her. Oh! why may the dried grass grow green again, but my love must be dead forever? Oh! ye woods and forests sleep no more, but awake and mourn with me, for Eurydice is dead! She is dead, dead, dead."

So he wandered making his moan and wringing the hearts of all who heard him with the sorrow of his singing. When he could find no comfort upon earth he bethought him of his wife's words:

"This side the river of death we can dwell together no more. But love is stronger than

death, and some day our love shall prevail, never again to be conquered."

He pondered the words in his heart and wondered what she might mean.

"If love is stronger than death," he thought, "then my love can win her back. If I can charm the hearts of all living things with the magic of my song, I may charm, too, the souls of the dead and their pitiless king, so that he shall give me back Eurydice, my wife. I will go down to the dark halls of Hades, and bring her up to the fair earth once more."

When hope was thus born anew in his heart he grew brave for any venture, and pressed forward on his way till he came to the mouth of Hades. Nothing daunted by the tales of horror men told him, he entered the fearsome cave, which led deep down into the bowels of the earth, where noisome vapors choked the breath in his throat, and dark forms crouched in his path and fled shrieking before him, till at last he stood by the shores of the ninefold Styx that winds

about the realms of the dead. Then he shouted aloud to Charon, the ferryman, to row him across in his boat. When the old man heard his voice, he stopped midway across the stream.

"Who is it who calls to me in the voice of the living?" he asked.

"It is Orpheus," was the answer. "I am come to fetch back Eurydice, my wife."

But the old man laughed and his laugh cut the heart of Orpheus like a knife.

"O beardless innocent," he said, "who gave thee power over life and death? I tell thee that many have stood by the shores of this stream and entreated me to take them across, that they might bring their dear ones back with them. But no living soul may sit in my boat, nor shall the dead, who have sat in it once, ever return to sit in it again. Go back to the earth, young man, and when thy time hast come, thou, too, shall sit in my boat, never fear."

"That time has come, Charon," he said, "and I shall sit in thy boat this day."

Raising his lyre, he struck the chords, and his love taught him the tune and the words to sing. Steadfastly he gazed at Charon, and the magic of his singing drew the old man toward him as surely as though the rope of the boat were in his hands. Without ceasing his song, he took his place in the stern, and in time to the music Charon dipped his oars in the stream, so that the boat swung over the river as it had never swung before. As it stranded in shallow water, Orpheus leaped lightly to the shore.

"Farewell for the present, Charon," he cried; "we shall meet again ere long."

He hastened on his way, playing and singing his magic song. Resting on his pole the old man looked after him with wonder in his heart and shaded his eyes with his hand. For a ray of the sun seemed to shine for a minute in that gray, cold land as Orpheus passed by. The pale flowers of Hell tossed their heads to and fro, as though the west wind played through their leaves, and their color and scent came back to them once

more. With a sigh, Charon breathed in the perfume from the air, and tossed back the gray locks from his brow, and straightened his drooping shoulders.

"It is long since I smelt the fresh smell of earth," he muttered. "Who is this young god, who can bring light to the darkness and life to the realms of the dead?"

So till Orpheus passed out of sight and the sound of his singing grew faint in the distance Charon stood looking after him, and then with a sigh he sat down in his boat and bent to his oars once more.

And Orpheus went on his way, with hope beating high in his heart, till he came to the portals of the Palace of Death. On the threshold lay Cerberus, the three-headed hound of Hell, who night and day kept watch beside the gate to see that no one passed in save those who had died upon earth, and that those who had passed him once should pass him never again. When he heard Orpheus he sprang to his feet and snarled and growled and bared his sharp

white fangs; but as the strains of the music grew clearer he sank silent to the ground, and stretched his three great heads between his paws. Orpheus, as he passed by, bent down and stroked him and the fierce beast licked his hands. So he entered the gates of Death and passed through the shadowy halls, till he stood before the throne of Pluto, the king. A dim and awful form did he sit, wrapped in darkness and in mists, and on his right hand sat Persephone, his wife, whom he had stolen from the meadows of Sicily. When he saw Orpheus his eyes gleamed like the gleam of cold steel, and he stretched forth his gaunt right arm toward him.

"What dost thou here, Orpheus?" he asked.

"I am come to ask a boon of thee, O King," he answered.

"There be many that ask me a boon," said Pluto, "but none receive it."

"Yet none have stood before thee in the flesh, as I do, O King, to ask their boon."

"Because thou hast trespassed unlawfully on my domain, dost thou think I will grant thee thy boon?"

"Nay; but because my grief is so great that I have dared what none have dared before me, I pray thee to hear me."

Without waiting for answer, he struck his lyre and sang to them the story of life and how he had loved and lost Eurydice. The eyes of the pale queen brightened when she heard him, and the color came back to her cheeks, as the song brought to mind the days of her girlhood and the sunlit meadows of Sicily. Then a great pity filled her heart for Eurydice, who had left the green earth forever, and might not return, as she herself did, in the springtime, living only the dark winter months below. As Orpheus ceased his song, she laid her hand upon her husband's.

"My lord," she said, "grant his boon, I pray you. He is brave and true-hearted, and he sings as no man ever sang before."

But the stern king sat with his head upon

his hand and his eyes cast down, deep in thought. At length he spoke, and his voice was soft and kind.

"Orpheus," he said, "thou hast touched my heart with thy singing. Yet it lies not with me to grant thee thy boon."

"But if the queen, thy wife, may return to the earth in the springtime, may not Eurydice, too, come back at thy command?" asked Orpheus.

"The ways of gods are not the ways of mortals, Orpheus; they walk by paths thou mayst not tread. Yet, though I have no power to give thee back Eurydice, thou mayst win her thyself if thou hast the strength."

"How may that be?" cried Orpheus. "For the sake of Eurydice I have strength for any venture."

"No strength of flesh can win her, Orpheus, but the strength of a faith unfaltering. I will send for her, and when thou seest her within the hall, holding out her hands to thee, thou must harden thy heart,

and turn and flee before her by the way thou camest. For love of thee she will follow, and she will entreat thee to look at her and give her thy hand over the stony way. But thou must neither look at her or speak to her. One look, one word, will be thy undoing, and she will vanish from thine eyes forever. The spell of thy song still rests upon the guardians of my kingdom, and they will let thee and thy wife pass by. But think not by word or deed to help her, alone she passed from life to death, alone she must pass from death to life. Her love and thy faith can be the only bond between you. Hast thou strength for this?"

"My lord," cried Orpheus, " 'tis but a small thing to ask of a love like mine."

"It will be harder than thou thinkest," the king replied. "Nevertheless, I will call Eurydice."

He signed a messenger to fetch her. In a few minutes he returned, and with him came Eurydice from the garden of Death. The dank dew hung heavy about her, and

she walked with her eyes upon the ground, while her long black hair hid the paleness of her face. Thus did she come into the center of the hall, and, not speaking or moving, Orpheus gazed upon her till she raised her eyes and saw him. With a cry she sprang toward him.

"Orpheus!" she said.

But, remembering the words of the king, he turned and fled before her through the misty halls and out by the great gate; Cerberus lay tamed with his heads between his paws. And he tried to shut his ears to her pleading as they sped across the plain, but every word she said cut his heart like a stab, and more than once he almost turned to answer her, so piteous was her cry.

"Orpheus, what have I done? Why dost thou flee from me? Oh, give me one word, one look to say thou lovest me still!"

But he remained firm in his resolve, and sat himself in Charon's boat, and steeled his heart, whilst she sat beside him and could not touch him. For he was a living

soul and she a shade, and might not touch him if she would. But still she pleaded with him.

"O Orpheus, my heart is starving for one look, one word. I know thou lovest me, but oh! to see thine eyes tell me so and hear thy lips say it."

He longed to turn and clasp her in his arms, and tell her how he loved her better than life. But still he refrained and hugged his lyre close to his breast in his agony; and as soon as the boat touched the shore he leapt out and hastened up the dark steep path, while the sweat stood out in drops upon his brow, so hard was the way and so stifling the air. Behind him followed Eurydice, and if the way was hard for him, for her it was ten times harder. She had no strength for words and only by her sobs could Orpheus know she was following still. At length the air grew fresh and pure as the daylight shone before them at the mouth of the cave. With eager steps Orpheus pressed on, but as the way grew easier for

him, it grew harder for Eurydice, for no one may pass from death to life without sore travail and pain. So she struggled and stumbled after him, until she felt she could follow no farther.

"Orpheus," she cried in her despair, "thy hand!"

Before reason could restrain him, his heart had answered her sudden cry, and he turned and held out his hand to help her. All too late he knew his folly. For as he was about to touch her, she slipped away. As smoke is borne away on the wings of the wind, so she was borne away, helpless and lifeless, to the realms of the dead, and her voice floated back like the echo of a dream.

"Orpheus, Orpheus, farewell. Alas, alas! Farewell."

So for the second time did he lose Eurydice; and if his grief was great before, it was ten times greater now. For as the cup of joy had touched his lips it had slipped from his hand and broken, and he knew

that the chance which had been given him once would never be given again, and that for the rest of his life he must dwell in loneliness without Eurydice. Blindly he went forward with his lyre beneath his arm. The strings hung broken and lifeless, for the rocks and thorns had torn them on his way up from Hades. He made no effort to mend them, for the strings of his heart hung lifeless too, and the music in his soul was dead. In black despair he wandered, not knowing where he went, but like a colt that has wandered by unknown paths returns at last surely to his own homestead, his feet carried him back to his boyhood's home. When he realized where he was, a faint joy came into his heart. All was silent and deserted and he sat down alone with his own sad thoughts till he felt a touch upon his shoulder, and looked up into the face of Cheiron standing beside him.

"O my master!" he cried.

"My son, thou hast suffered," said Cheiron.

"I have been down into Hades, Cheiron," he answered.

"My child, I know all," said Cheiron.

Orpheus looked into his mild eyes, full of pity, and knew that he understood, though how he had learnt his tale he could not tell. And his heart drew comfort from the sympathy that understood without words, and was softened as the parched earth is softened by rain.

So he lived once more with Cheiron and his lads. In time, the bitterness of grief was purged away and he remembered Eurydice as something bright and fair that had been woven into the web of his life while it was yet young, and which never could be taken away. As he listened to the old songs which Cheiron had sung to him and to his comrades when they were boys, the fire and eagerness of his youth were born once more within him. When he saw the older ones go forth into the world and the young ones brought up to take their place with Cheiron, he felt how life stands ever beckoning and

calling to those in whose veins the blood of heroes and gods runs, and they go forth to rule and to serve, to fight and to labor, in answer to the call which the foolish do not hear.

One morning he took his lyre, which had lain silent for so long, and putting fresh strings in place of the broken ones, he passed his fingers lovingly over them. And the spirit of music sprang to life once more in his heart, as the flowers spring to life when the winter is past, so that once more he could charm every living thing with the magic of his song.

When Cheiron knew that his power had come back to him he was glad.

"Orpheus," he said, "thou hast conquered. A weaker man than thou art would have lain crushed beneath the foot of adversity. But those who bravely rise again are stronger than before."

"Master," he said, "when I saw the broken strings of my lyre and felt my voice choked within me, I said, 'With the break-

ing of this string music dies and becomes a voiceless echo of the past, just as now Eurydice is a shade in a shadowy land while her body is dust upon earth,' and lo! ere the strings were mended or the voice grew strong again, the soul of song lived once more in my heart, as on the day when first my mother Calliope breathed her spirit upon me. If music may live without sound or words, may not the soul live too without bones and flesh? This is a mystery and I must seek the wide world for an answer."

And Cheiron smiled upon him.

"It is good to seek," said he, "though thou find no answer in the end."

"Yet will I find an answer," said Orpheus.

So when the call of Jason came soon after for him to sail with the heroes on the good ship *Argo* for the finding of the Golden Fleece, and to be their minstrel on the stormy seas, he went down right gladly to Iolchos. At the sound of his song the gallant ship leapt over the stones and into the sea like a charger ready for battle, though be-

fore she had been too heavy to move. So he sailed with the heroes on their perilous venture, filling their hearts with courage and hope, and took them safely through many a danger by the magic of his song. When Ulysses passed the island of the sirens he had himself tied to the mast, that he might hear their song yet be unable to yield to their allurements, but when Orpheus passed, he sat upon the deck indifferent, for so great a musician was he that the sirens' songs were as discords beside the beauty and the strength of his melody. Though many set out on the quest of the Golden Fleece, there were few that returned, and Orpheus saw the wreck of many a promising life on that voyage and found no answer to his quest, and yet within his heart was faith that the soul of man could not die.

So he wandered the wide world alone with his lyre, to Crete, to Egypt, and his heart was eased in the worship of Dionysos. And in his service he found communion of soul with soul and learned what Eurydice meant

when she said, "Some day our love shall prevail, never again to be conquered." And his faith was pure and strong because he believed in the immortality of life that changeth not, like the life of the stars in heaven.

At last Orpheus came to Thrace and the wild mountain lands that lie to the north of Greece. There he tamed the hill tribes with his magic of music, and lived a life of abstinence and purity and ecstasy of soul. There were those who claimed to worship Dionysos, but they worshiped him in noisy revels with the madness born of wine, with much shedding of the blood of goats, and to Orpheus this was evil and he would have naught of it. And because there is no hate greater than the hatred of those who worship the same god in different ways there came a day when the mad frenzy of the Mænads turned against Orpheus, and they slew his body and cast it into the River Hebrus where it floated gently down to the sea to the shores of Lesbos. There the Muses

buried it, and made of the tomb a sacred shrine where young men came from far and wide to worship and consult the oracle. And about that shrine the nightingales sang more sweetly than in any other spot on earth, for they learnt their songs from the lips of Orpheus himself. And men bound themselves together in a holy brotherhood and tried to live by the rules written on his tablets. Some of those who pretended to follow him were charlatans and rogues and brought dishonor on his name, while some kept the letter without the spirit of his law, but among them were those of a pure and blameless life, who kept his doctrines, and handed them down from generation to generation till in time they became the foundation stones of the great philosophies of Pythagoras and Plato.

Thus did Orpheus live and die, and pointed out to men the path to immortality by purity and abstinence and ecstasy of soul. There were many of old who hated his way, and many who hate it still, when it comes to them from a greater God than his, because

it is too high for them to live by. But there are those to whom it still brings peace and joy, though under other names than his. These are those who have seen the inner light, and their souls are at peace.

ELSIE FINNIMORE BUCKLEY
(*adapted*)

THE LYRE, THE EAGLE, AND THE SWAN

DURING the midsummer months a large right-angled triangle may be traced in the northeastern sky. It is marked by two stars of the first magnitude, Vega and Altair, and by a third only slightly less brilliant, Deneb. Vega is easily identified as it is the brightest of the summer stars and shines almost directly overhead. Bluish-white in color, it has been called the great white diamond of the sky. A line drawn from Vega across the Milky Way to the east touches Altair at the apex of the triangle, and Deneb, to the northeast in the Milky Way, is at the right angle.

Vega, with four smaller stars in a diamond-shaped figure below her, forms the constellation which the Greeks saw as the lyre of Orpheus. Other peoples also saw this figure as a musical instrument: like the Greeks, the Persians called it the lyre; the

ORPHEUS AND AQUILA, THE EAGLE

ancient Britons, the harp of King Arthur; the early Christians, David's harp; while the Czechs named it the fiddle of the sky.

Altair, a brilliant white star with a yellowish tinge, is in the constellation of the Eagle; flanked by two smaller stars at an equal distance on either side of it, they are sometimes mistaken for Orion's belt. This eagle, Aquila, flying across the Milky Way is given

in Greek mythology as the one that stood by the throne of Jupiter, bearing his thunder in its claws. It was this eagle which carried off Ganymede, the beautiful shepherd boy, from the slopes of Mount Ida, to be the cupbearer of the gods.

Vega is the Weaving Maiden of the Japanese Legend and Altair the Herd Boy.

Deneb is at the head of the magnificent constellation which we usually see as the Northern Cross, though the Greeks saw it as a huge swan flying down the Milky Way toward the southeast. The arms of the cross are the bird's outstretched wings; the upright, his long neck; and the head of the cross, his tail. Some say this is the swan used as a disguise by Jupiter when he visited Leda, mother of Castor and Pollux; others say Orpheus, the musician; while still others are sure it is Cygnus, the intimate friend of Phaëton, who grieved so over his friend's untimely end that Apollo, in pity, changed him into a swan and set him in the sky.

THE TWIN BROTHERS

A ROMAN LEGEND

HELEN, known as the most beautiful of women, had twin brothers, as handsome in their way as she in hers. They were renowned also for their skill and dexterity in manly games, as well as for their valor in battle. Their names were Castor and Pollux. It was said that Castor was wholly mortal while Pollux was half immortal. But so alike were they and so inseparable in their devotion to each other, that no one could tell one from the other.

Many brave deeds were performed by them. When Helen was a mere child of ten, she was so exquisitely lovely that all who saw her longed to possess her, and Theseus who was afterward to slay that terrible monster, the Minotaur, stole her away and hid her in his mother's house. Castor and Pollux, though but children themselves, went

in pursuit of her and rescued her by force of arms and returned her unharmed to her own home.

When Jason built the great ship *Argo* and set forth in quest of the Golden Fleece, he took with him all the great heroes of his time: Ulysses, who was later to fight before Troy for Helen, and to voyage for many years and have many strange adventures before reaching home from the Trojan war; Hercules, who had not yet completed the twelve great labors that were to win him his place among the stars; Orpheus, whose lyre brought joy and safety to the Argonauts; Achilles, Theseus and many others; and not least among them, Castor and Pollux. It is said that during the voyage, whenever a storm threatened the *Argo* or brought the ship into danger, twin flames would play about the heads of the twin brothers and the winds and waves would be calmed. Forever after that the balls of fire that play about the masthead and yardarm in electrical storms

at sea, were called "Ledæan Lights," and sailors prayed to the valiant brothers, and many a ship bore their image as figurehead, and trusted to Castor and Pollux to bring them home in safety from the stormiest voyage.

After the successful ending of this great quest, the brothers, mounted on twin white horses, joined with the other heroes in the great Calydonian boar hunt. So absolutely devoted were the brothers, that it is impossible to separate their brave deeds, or to tell of one without the other, for they were always together until separated by death. Even then, their separation was brief, for when the mortal Castor was slain in battle, Pollux was so inconsolable that Jupiter was moved by his sorrow and caused the brothers to be placed in the sky, where they shine, like two friendly eyes looking down upon the earth, a perpetual symbol of brotherly love and devotion.

When great battles were fought on earth, it is said that often the brothers would ap-

pear mounted on their great white steeds and fight on the side of right and justice.

When the Romans, tired of the tyranny of their kings, rose and drove them out, they established a republic. But they were not left in peace to govern themselves; the Tarquins raised army after army to attack the city. Twelve years after the founding of the republic, Tarquin the Proud, the last of the kings, succeeded in uniting the thirty cities of the Latines and with a mighty army marched against Rome. Aulus, leader and victor of seventy battles, led the forces of Rome out to meet their enemies. The two armies met on the banks of Lake Regillus; the battle that took place was a terrible one. The Latines had the advantage of numbers and were no mean foes, but the Romans fought desperately. If the Latines broke through their lines, the city was doomed, for every man who could fight was there; only men too old to fight and boys, too young, had been left behind the walls. It was a hard fought fight; on both sides the bravest

warriors fell like the masts of mighty ships snapped by a gale. First one line and then the other would be swept back, only to rally and sweep forward again.

Herminius, who had kept the bridge with Horatius on that other day when Rome was threatened, rode forward on his black charger, Auster, to be slain by the sword of Titus, bravest of the Tarquins. Titus, himself, about to mount the great horse left riderless, was killed by Aulus who sprang forward and brought his blade down with such vigor that the blood spurted from Titus' neck like a fountain and his lifeless body lay across that of Herminius. Now the Latines fought furiously, to regain the body of their leader, and the Roman line wavered under their onslaught. Aulus quieted the frightened horse, looked to the girths, and leaped into the saddle.

"Together we will avenge your master!" He spoke into the horse's ear, then turned to rally his men. To his surprise, beside him, on his right hand, rode two princely

strangers. They were dressed exactly alike in white armor that had been fashioned at no earthly forge, and rode upon two marvelous horses from no earthly sire. Romans and Latines, alike, trembled with awe before them.

"Who are you?" questioned Aulus, when he recovered his breath. "Where do you come from? Why do you ride with us?"

"Men call us by many names," replied the Twins. "We have many houses. In Samothrace, in Cyrene, in Tarentum, before our marble portals in Syracuse, daily men bring flowers and garlands. Because Rome fights for right and honor, we fight beside you to-day."

Then they couched their spears and bent low in their saddles, and spurred their white horses, and the whole Roman host rushed with them toward the foe. So terrifying was the onslaught, and so fearsome the trumpet flourish of the charge that echoed and reëchoed through the hills, that the thirty standards of the cities trembled and

the lines broke. The followers of the Tarquins fled before the fierceness of those led by the radiant Twins.

On the walls of Rome, the City Fathers sat at the eastern gate, surrounded by the old men, the women, and children, who had been left behind. All through the day they watched for a messenger, hoping at one moment for victory and at the next moment dreading to look, lest they see the army of their foes advancing ruthlessly upon them.

At sunset they saw a cloud of dust in the distance, then they heard the sound of hoof-beats. Two horsemen, whose armor and white steeds were stained with blood, reached the gate and threw up their right arms in salute.

"Hail to the greatest of cities! Hail to the seven hills of Rome!" they cried. "A great battle has been fought to-day at Lake Regillus. To-morrow, the spoils of thirty cities will be laid upon the Altars of Rome."

A great shout went up from a thousand

throats and then the crowd scattered to spread the news of the glorious victory.

The Twins rode slowly to the Forum. Such was the dignity of their bearing that no one dared to ask their names or race, but boughs of laurel were strewn before them and showers of roses were tossed upon them from the housetops. Looking neither to the right nor left, they rode straight to the spring that bubbled up beside the House of the Vestal Virgins. Dismounting, they cleansed the marks of battle from their armor and their horses. The people stood silently watching them. Glistening white once more, the Twins vaulted onto the horses' backs and rode at the door of the house, where, to the amazement of all they vanished in a flash. In awe each man stared speechlessly at his neighbor; then Sergius, High Pontiff, broke the silence.

"The Gods have fought for Rome to-day! The great Twin Brethren have saved our hosts, and have themselves brought us news of the victory. Here, in memory of this day,

we shall build a Temple in their honor."

So in the Forum, where the spring gushed forth, a Temple was built in honor of Castor and Pollux; and each year on the anniversary of the Battle of Lake Regillus, on the Ides of Quintillus (which we would call July fifteenth) the Senate sat on the porch of this temple and reviewed the famous mounted knights of Rome, known as the Equites. As the maidens of the city sang songs of the brave deeds of these knights, and the people cheered and shouted their praises, the heroes rode in solemn procession in the glory of their heroic patrons, Castor and Pollux.

To this day, three slender graceful columns stand among the ruins of the ancient Forum, still reminding all who see them of that day so long ago when the Twins left the celestial heights to fight for the Roman Republic.

GEMINI: THE TWINS

JUST above Betelgeuse in the right shoulder of Orion are two parallel lines of stars which since classic times have been known as human twins, the Gemini. The constellation is easily recognized by the two brightest stars, Castor and Pollux. Pollux, the orange-tinted star in the head of the right-hand twin, is now the brighter of the two, though, as shown on star maps of three centuries ago, Castor was formerly the more brilliant. It is interesting to note that they never rise at the same moment; Castor is always in the lead.

They are the third of the signs of the Zodiac. In astrology they are placed in the house of Mercury. They are a strong masculine sign, being supposed to bring good luck to those born under them between the twentieth of May and the twenty-first of

June, especially to athletes and sailors.

The English call these stars the Giant's Eyes; the Japanese and Chinese, the two kids. The Buddhists saw the whole constellation as a woman holding a golden cord; the Arabs thought it represented two peacocks; the Egyptians, two growing plants; and the Hindus like the Greeks saw in it, twin deities.

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA

A GREEK LEGEND

PERSEUS was the son of Danaë who was the daughter of the king of Argos. When Perseus was a very small boy, some wicked people put him with his mother into a great chest and cast them into the sea, hoping that they would be drowned or dashed to pieces upon some rocky shore.

The northwest wind blew freshly out of the blue mountains, and wind and waves carried the chest swiftly out to sea. The child slept as if rocked in a cradle but the mother was in agony as the billows tossed the unwieldy vessel up and down; it seemed as if each white-crested wave might overturn it.

They soon floated past the purple headlands and into the open sea. A day went by and a night; all about them was open sea and sky, another day and another night, till Danaë, faint with hunger and fatigue and

fear, fell asleep also. She was awakened suddenly, the chest was grinding and jarring, the air was full of sound. With a start she looked up and saw over her head mighty cliffs, all red in the setting sun, and around her rocks and breakers and flying flakes of foam. She gave a cry of fear, but a calm voice from the shore reassured her. The chest was entangled in nets and a fisherman was hauling it in, so that she and her child were soon safe upon a ledge of rock.

Danaë realized at once that she had been rescued by no common fisherman. The man was tall and stately, his stature and his walk, and his flowing golden hair and beard made him a striking figure, and the strength and kindness of his face gave her hope and confidence.

"Who are you?" he asked, "and what strange chance has brought you here in this frail boat? From your beauty and dignity you must be the daughter of a king; and surely this boy is somewhat more than ordinary mortal."

"Through evil chance was I set adrift," answered Danaë, on her knees before him. "Tell me to what land I have come, unhappy that I am; and among what men I have fallen."

"This island is Seriphos," replied the fisherman. "My brother Polydectes is its king. Men call me Dictys, the netter, because I catch fish upon the shore."

"Oh, sir," cried Danaë falling before his feet, "have mercy upon a stranger whom cruel fate has driven to your land, let me live in your house as a servant. My child and I will not be burdens upon you, for I am skillful above the other maidens of my land in weaving, spinning, and embroidery. But treat me honorably, for it is true I was the daughter of a king, and this boy, as you have said, is of no common race."

She would have pleaded more, but Dictys stopped her and raised her from the ground, saying: "My daughter, I am old and my hairs are growing gray; I have no children

to make my home cheerful. Come, you shall be a daughter to me and to my wife; this boy shall be as our own grandson. For the Gods would have us show hospitality to strangers, knowing that good deeds as well as evil ones, always return to those who do them."

So Danaë and the boy Perseus lived with the good fisherman and his wife in safety and happiness until the boy had grown to be a strong and handsome youth, skillful in games, and in the use of arms, and in the ways of the sea.

Now Polydectes, the king, was a very different man from his brother Dictys, the fisherman. He was both selfish and wicked. When he first saw Danaë, because of her beauty, he wished to marry her, but she had no thought for any one except her child and her kind foster-parents. The king was so angered by her refusal to wed him that he resolved to do her some great injury. His first plan was to make her his slave and

break her spirit and her beauty by degrading work. Then he decided to bide his time and punish her through Perseus, knowing that the greatest suffering he could inflict upon her would be the loss of her son.

So as Perseus grew to manhood, the evil-minded king spent much time plotting and planning some fatal enterprise on which to send the young man. Now Perseus grew daily stronger and more handsome, until he stood a head taller than any other man on the island. He was so skillful in wrestling, running and boxing, and withal so gentle and courteous, that those of the islanders who were not as jealous and wicked as their king, loved him and murmured among themselves that he must be the son of an immortal and worthy to be a king himself. So that Polydectes, knowing that his subjects hated him for his unjust and selfish ways, began to fear and hate Perseus, and longed to get rid of him not merely because of his desire for revenge upon Danaë for her rejection of his suit, but also to prevent an uprising

among his people to overthrow him and place Perseus upon the throne of Seriphos.

At last he hit upon a scheme and sent for the youth, pretending to receive him with all courtesy and friendliness.

"Perseus," he said, smiling craftily upon him. "You are now a man, full grown with strength and powers above others of your age. You have received much kindness from my brother and myself. If I call upon you to repay it in some small way, are you ready?"

"Ready and willing, Your Majesty!" replied Perseus, with head erect. "My life is at your service."

"Bravely spoken," said the king, still with the cunning smile upon his lips; "I have a great adventure to propose to you. As a brave and enterprising youth you will rejoice to have so rare an opportunity of distinguishing yourself. You must know, my good Perseus, that I plan to marry the beautiful Princess of the Amazons, Hippodamia. Every bridegroom longs to give his bride

some unusual gift to show his thought of her. To-day, I flatter myself, I have thought of an article more unusual than any conceived of before; the most far-fetched and remarkable curiosity that the most exacting bride could desire."

"And am I to procure it for Your Majesty?" cried Perseus, eagerly.

"You are, if you are as brave and dauntless as I believe you to be," answered Polydectes very graciously. "The bridal gift upon which I have set my heart is the head of the Gorgon Medusa, with the snaky locks. I shall depend upon you to bring it to me as soon as possible."

"I will set out at once," said Perseus, bravely, though he knew that a trap had been set for him and the chance of returning alive was a remote one.

There were three Gorgons, most strange and terrible monsters, half woman, half dragon. Instead of hands they had brass talons, their teeth were long tusks, their bodies were encased in overlapping scales of

brass, and instead of hair, live snakes grew from their heads, twisting and turning, wriggling and curling, and thrusting their venomous forked tongues at any one who ventured near. They had huge wings, exceedingly splendid ones, for every feather was pure, bright, glittering, burnished gold, dazzling and bewildering when the Gorgons flew about in the sunlight. They had a strange, wild beauty of their own, but no one ever stopped to look at them. For more terrible than the strength of their teeth and talons, or the deadly sting of their snaky locks, was their power to turn any poor mortal, who looked them full in the face, in an instant from warm flesh and blood into cold and lifeless stone.

Perseus knew at once that Polydectes had devised this quest in order to get rid of him forever. He resolved, however, to attempt the feat. He could not bear to alarm his mother, so without bidding her farewell, he took his shield and girded on his sword, and crossed over to the mainland, where he sat

down in a lonely spot on the top of the cliffs to try to plan for what seemed an almost impossible deed.

He sat there with his head in his hands, in great dejection, when he felt a light touch on his shoulder. Looking up he saw beside him a lively youth, seemingly about his own age. A very brisk, intelligent, and remarkably shrewd-looking fellow, glowing with life and vigor, with eyes like sparks of fire. He had an odd cap, with living wings fluttering from each side, upon his head, and on his feet were golden sandals with a pair of the same kind of wings fluttering from the heels; and his walking stick had snakes carved upon it so realistically that Perseus felt as if he saw them twist and untwist as he watched them. With it all the stranger had such a merry and clever aspect, with such a lively twinkle in his eye, that Perseus felt his own spirits rise at the sight of him.

"Why so sad and melancholy?" he queried.

"I am not so sad," answered Perseus, briskly, putting on as brave a look as he could. "Only thoughtful over an adventure I have undertaken."

"Oho!" said the stranger. "Tell me about it, perhaps I can be of service. I have helped not a few young heroes through adventures that looked very difficult beforehand. You may have heard of me. I have more names than one, but Mercury suits me as well as any other. Tell me your trouble."

Perseus outlined his quest briefly and Mercury listened with grave attention.

"It would be a great pity to have you turned into a marble statue," he said when Perseus had concluded, "though you would make a very handsome one which would endure much longer than a man's lifetime. But no doubt you'd rather be a man for a few years than the finest of statues for many centuries."

"Indeed I would," cried Perseus.

"Well, well, perhaps this adventure will

turn out well rather than ill," said Mercury, encouragingly. "My sister and I will do our best to bring you through this affair, ugly as it now looks."

"Your sister?" repeated Perseus.

"Yes, my sister," answered Mercury; "not so lively a companion as I, but the wisest of women. If you are as brave and cautious as we judge you to be, have no fear. But first, you must polish your shield until you can see your face in it."

It seemed an odd beginning of a fearsome adventure to Perseus, for he felt the strength of his shield to be of more importance than its brilliance as a mirror. But Mercury's tone was so positive that he immediately set to work and scrubbed the shield with such vigor that it soon shone as brightly as a full moon at harvest time. Mercury smiled and nodded his head in approval. Then taking off his own short and crooked sword, he girded it around Perseus.

"No sword but mine will answer your purpose," observed he; "the blade has an excel-

lent temper and will cut through iron and brass as easily as through the slenderest twig. Now we must be off. The next thing is to find the Three Gray Women who are the only ones who can tell us where the Nymphs are to be found."

"The Three Gray Women?" cried Perseus impatiently. "Pray who may they be?" For he was eager to be off on his adventure and longed to head straight for the Gorgons.

"They are three very strange beings," answered Mercury, laughingly; "they have but one eye between them and one tooth. Moreover, you can find them only by starlight or in the dusk, for they never show themselves by the light of either the sun or the moon."

"But why must I waste my time on them? Surely it were better to press on at once in search of Medusa's head."

"There are several things to be done before you can find your way to the Gorgons. When we meet the Three Gray Women you will be nearer the end of your adventure

than we are now," answered his new friend.

For seven days they traveled through moors and fens toward the bleak northwest, turning neither toward the right hand nor the left, till they came to the Unshapen Land and the Place-that-has-no-name on the edge of everlasting night. They walked a path of which few tell, for those who have trodden it like least to speak of it, and those who go there in dreams are glad to awake. The soil was hard with ice, and all was waste and desolate in the gray twilight that grew more and more obscure. Here they found the Three Gray Women, sitting upon a log of driftwood by the shore of the freezing sea, nodding and crooning a low song together, "The old times were better than the new."

The light was so faint that Perseus could hardly see them, but as he drew nearer he saw they had long gray hair, frosted by the foam of the sea, and that two of them had empty eye-sockets in the center of their foreheads while in the middle of the third sis-

ter's forehead there was a very bright and piercing eye which sparkled like a huge diamond. So penetrating was it that, as the sisters rose and turned toward the place where Perseus and Mercury stood, the men involuntarily hid behind a clump of bushes, for it seemed as if that eye would be able to see as clearly at midnight as at noon. The sight of three persons' eyes had been melted into that single one. The sisters took turns wearing it, passing it from one to the other, and the one having it in her forehead led the other two by the hands. Just as they approached Perseus' hiding place they began to quarrel.

"Sister, Sister Scarecrow," cried one, "you have had the eye far longer than is fair. It's my turn now."

"Let me keep it a little longer, Sister Nightmare," answered Scarecrow, "I thought I saw something moving in a nearby bush."

"What of that?" cried Nightmare. "I can see into a bush as well as you. The eye is

as much mine as yours. I insist upon having it at once!"

"And what about me?" cried the third sister. "I've been in darkness a long time! If there is something in the bush, I'd like to see it."

Then they all chattered and complained, till, to end the dispute, Dame Scarecrow took the eye from her brow and held it out in her hand.

"Take it one of you," she cried, "and stop this quarreling. For my own part I'll be glad of a little peaceful darkness. Take it quickly or I shall clap it back into my own head again."

Both Nightmare and Shakejoint stretched out their hands, groping about, eager to snatch the eye from Scarecrow's hand. But all three were now in darkness and could not find each other's hands.

"Now is your chance," whispered Mercury to Perseus; "quick, before one can take it, snatch the eye from Scarecrow and do not give it back until they have told you

where to find the Nymphs who guard the flying sandals, the enchanted wallet, and the helmet of invisibility.

As the Three Gray Women were still loudly scolding each other, Perseus stepped lightly out and gently took the marvelous eye in his hand. The sisters, of course, each thought the other had it and went on quarreling until Perseus said quietly, "Ladies, do not blame each other. Your eye is in my hand and I shall restore it to you as soon as you have answered a few questions."

In a fury the three turned toward the sound of his voice.

"You, you have our eye!" they cried. "Who are you?"

"Give it back to us."

"Of what use is it to you?"

"You, who have two of your own, how can you be so cruel as to take ours!"

They were all terribly frightened and tried to clutch Perseus, but he stepped out of reach of their groping hands.

"Do not alarm yourselves, ladies," he

begged them kindly. "I shall return your eye at once if you will but tell me where to find the Nymphs—"

"Nymphs, Nymphs," cried the old women, "there are all kinds of Nymphs: in trees, in rivers, in lakes and oceans; they are in pleasant places. How would we in this desolate land know of the Nymphs? Oh, wicked one, give us back our eye. Whosoever you may be, give us our eye!"

"My good dames," he again tried to reassure them, taking good care to keep out of their reach, "the Nymphs I seek are those who keep the magic purse, the flying sandals and the helmet of invisibility."

"Mercy on us, sisters," exclaimed the three, with every appearance of astonishment, "what is the fellow talking of? Flying sandals! Does he want his heels higher than his head? What sort of a contrivance is a magic purse? What helmet could make any one invisible unless it were large enough for him to hide under?

"Oh, good stranger, have pity on three

PERSEUS STOOD SILENT AND WAITED

old women," they began again. "Give, oh give us back our eye."

So piteously did they protest and whine, that Perseus began to believe them and was about to give back the eye when Mercury held his hand.

"Don't let them fool you," he whispered, "if they do not tell us where to find the Nymphs you will never succeed in finding the Gorgons."

So Perseus stood silent and waited until at last the Three Gray Women were convinced that the only way to obtain their precious eye was to tell him what he wanted.

"You must go, foolish one," they said, "to the southward, into the ugly glare of the sun, till you come to Atlas, the giant who holds the earth and sky apart. There near the foot of the mountain on which he stands you will find the Nymphs, his daughters, the Hesperides, in their garden guarded by the dragon."

Perseus gave them back their eye, at once; but instead of using it they nodded and fell

fast asleep and were turned into blocks of ice, and the tide came up and washed them away. Now, as icebergs, they float up and down forever, weeping whenever they meet the sunshine or the warm south winds.

Mercury and Perseus leaped away to the southward, leaving snow and ice behind, until the sun rose higher, day by day, upon a bright blue summer sea. At length far away, they saw, all rose red in the setting sun, a mighty mountain. Its feet were wrapped in forests and its head in wreaths of cloud; it was Atlas holding the sky upon his shoulders.

They wandered about the foot of the mountain through pleasant valleys with tall trees and strange flowers and ferns, and the murmur of running water, till they heard sweet voices singing like nightingales in a glade and knew they had found the Nymphs. Perseus stopped when he saw them dancing around the charmed tree on which grew golden apples, under which coiled the dragon, old Ladon, that sleepless serpent

with unblinking eyes, who guarded both the Nymphs and the tree. Perseus paused not from fear of the dragon but abashed by the beauty of the maidens. They too, stopped dancing and stood silent, surprised to see the handsome youth who had found his way to their hidden garden.

"Who are you?" they asked. "How came you here? What do you seek?"

They sighed and wept when he told them of his quest.

"No, no," they pleaded, "do not attempt such a feat. Before you could destroy Medusa she would freeze you into stone. Stay here and dance and sing with us."

"I must go," answered Perseus. "I have promised to risk this adventure. Better to die in the attempting of what may be beyond my power, than to live like an ox in a stall. I beg of you to help me. If you will give me the enchanted purse, the helmet of invisibility, and the flying sandals, I may succeed."

Since they could not persuade him to stay,

they willingly brought out their treasures. The enchanted wallet appeared to be but an ordinary leather purse but it had the quality of opening wide enough and growing large enough to hold anything its bearer wished to put into it. The winged sandals were like those worn by Mercury and had the power to carry their owner over land or sea or through the air. When Perseus went to put them on, he laid one of them on the ground beside him and unexpectedly it went fluttering into the air, frightening the birds out of their nests, and if Mercury had not made a flying leap after it, it might have flown off. It took Perseus a few minutes to learn how to walk in them. They were so buoyant that it was easy to walk above the tree-tops and difficult to clamber down.

Then the Nymphs brought out their most marvelous treasure, a shining helmet with a tuft of dark plumes; no sooner had they placed it on Perseus' head than he completely disappeared. Where, an instant before there had stood a handsome youth, with

rosy cheeks and golden curls, with his crooked sword and shining helmet and shield—a figure that was all color, courage and sprightliness—there was nothing but apparently transparent air.

"Where are you?" laughed the Nymphs.

"Why, here, of course," answered Perseus in surprise. "Can't you see me?"

His voice seemed to come out of the empty air.

"And the Gorgons will not be able to see you either," said Mercury. "Now," he cried, turning to the great figure on the mountain above them, "tell us, O Atlas, where lies the island of the Gorgons?"

"I will tell you," rumbled a great voice like thunder from the midst of the clouds, "but you must promise me one thing and keep faith. After you have slain Medusa, you must return this way and show me the terrible head. It is weary labor holding the earth and sky apart and I would fain be turned to stone."

Perseus promised and listened carefully

as Atlas gave him the directions for the rocky island where the Gorgons dwelt. Then thanking the Nymphs he and Mercury started forth on the last lap of their long journey. It was night and a bright silvery moon illumined the world below. The earth with its seas and lakes, the dark clusters of trees, its cities of white marble, and its winding rivers, spread below them with strange and awesome beauty. Sometimes they plunged through misty clouds and the world faded out; now and then they trod above the clouds with only the stars above them, and suddenly great meteors would gleam out, as if bonfires had been kindled in the sky.

As the two companions flew on, Perseus became conscious of the rustle of a skirt beside him.

"Is there some one else with us?" he asked Mercury.

"Yes," answered Mercury, "my sister, Athene, the wisest of us all. She is so wise she never wastes words. She will speak when she has something to tell you. She

has eyes that see everything. I warrant she'll be the first to sight the Gorgons."

They were now flying high in the air, over the isles where no ship ever cruises, where there is neither night nor day, and where nothing has a name.

"Perseus," said a quiet voice beside him, "there are the Gorgons."

"Where," he asked, "I cannot see them."

"A pebble dropped from your hand would strike them," went on the calm voice. "Fly swiftly down. Do not look directly at them. Look into your shield, it is for this you have polished it, and strike. The one in the center is Medusa. Your sword arm must be swift and sure. If you do not sever her head from her body with one stroke you will be killed."

Perseus flew down boldly but cautiously, until he could see the Gorgons clearly reflected in his shield. Two of them were hideous like huge swine, and they slept heavily as swine sleep, with their gorgeous wings outspread. Medusa was tossing in her sleep,

and as Perseus watched her reflection, he felt pity for her as she tossed, for she was as beautiful as a Nymph, but sad instead of joyous. Her plumage had all the colors of the rainbow in it, and her long neck was exquisitely white, but her brow was knit and her lips clenched as if with everlasting care and pain. For a minute he hesitated and had not the heart to strike. But as he paused her snaky locks stirred and reared their venomous heads threateningly toward him, and her lifted wings disclosed her brazen talons, and he realized that for all her beauty, Medusa was as foul and evil as the other two.

As he lifted his sword the snakes hissed and Medusa opened her eyes. But she awoke too late. His stroke was like a lightning flash. The sword was sharp. The head rolled from the body. Quick as thought, Perseus crammed it into the magic wallet and flew upward, just in the nick of time. He had need to fly faster than he had ever flown before, for the rattle of brazen wings and

talons as Medusa's headless body fell upon the rocks wakened her sisters.

Into the air they flung themselves, uttering the most blood-curdling shrieks. Thrice they swung round and round like hawks who beat for a partridge; and thrice they snuffed like hounds who draw upon a deer. Then they struck the scent of blood, checked for a minute to make sure, and then rushed after Perseus with a fearful howl, while the wind rattled hoarse in their wings. On they rushed flapping and sweeping like eagles after a hare; and Perseus' blood ran cold for all his courage, as he saw them come howling on his track.

"Bear me well now, brave sandals," he cried, "for the Hounds of Death are on my heels."

And well they bore him aloft, through cloud and sunshine, across the shoreless sea till the roar of pursuing wings grew fainter and fainter, and the howl of the voices died away.

Remembering his promise, as soon as Per-

seus had thanked his companions and they had bidden him goodspeed toward Seriphos, he went back at once to Atlas and his fair daughters. The Nymphs gloried in his victory and once more urged him to stay with them in their garden. Above Atlas groaned, saying, "Fulfill your promise." And the Nymphs hid their faces; Perseus, his own eyes averted, opened the enchanted wallet and held up the awful head, and Atlas became a crag of rock, sleeping forever above the clouds.

Bidding the Nymphs farewell, Perseus started homeward, eager to deliver his gruesome bridal gift to Polydectes and once more clasp his mother in his arms.

All through the night he flew and at dawn found himself looking down at a high cliff; and at the water's edge, under a black rock, he saw a white image.

"This," he said to himself, "must be the statue of some sea-god. I will go and see what it is these barbarians worship."

As he flew down, he saw it was no statue

but a maiden of flesh and blood. He could see her hair streaming in the breeze, and how she shrank and shivered as the waves sprinkled her with cold spray. Her arms were spread above her head and fastened to the rock with chains of brass. Her head drooped upon her breast, but now and then she would look up, with a faint moaning cry of "Mother."

Full of pity and indignation, Perseus looked upon her; she could not see him for he still wore the helmet of invisibility. Her skin was darker than his, and her hair was the blue-black of a hyacinth. "Surely," he thought, "she must be the daughter of a king. I have never seen any one so beautiful, no not in all the isles of Greece. Do barbarians treat their kings' daughters thus? She is too fair to have done any wrong."

He lifted his helmet from his head, and she gave a cry of fear, as he flashed into her sight.

"Do not fear me," he said gently. "I am

a Greek and no barbarian. What cruel men have bound you here? I shall free you."

"Touch me not," cried the maiden, "I am accursed. The sea-gods will slay you if you dare to set me free."

"I fear them not," cried Perseus, and drawing his sword cut through the chains as if they were a hempen rope. "Now you belong to me and not to the sea-gods, or to your own folk, whomever they may be, for if a jewel is cast by the wayside, it is his who dares to win and wear it, as I shall win and wear you! Surely Mercury and Athene, though they departed from my side, have guided me here to win a prize worthy of heroic toil."

"You know not of what you speak," said the maiden, "I am Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus, King of Jaffa, and my mother is Cassiopoeia of the beautiful tresses. I wait here to be the food of the sea monster to atone for my mother's sin. She boasted that I was fairer than the Queen of the Fishes; so that in wrath the sea-gods sent floods and

earthquakes to devastate our lands, and after the floods came a terrible monster bred of the slime who devours all living things. Now the monster has promised to leave us in peace if I am given to him as an atonement. I must die for a sin not my own, to save my people and my country."

"A sea-monster," laughed Perseus; "I have faced worse than a sea-monster, and could face worse for you, Andromeda, most fair and lovely one."

As Andromeda looked into his eyes, new hope was kindled in her breast, she longed to live. But she sighed again and turned her eyes from his. "No, no," she cried. "Go your way. You are too young to die. It is noble for me to give my life for others, but why should you be slain? I beseech you, go your way. I must accept my fate."

But for all her brave words she shuddered with fear and gave a moaning cry, "Go quickly, I see the monster coming with the sunrise as they said he would. I must die now. How shall I endure it? Go, I beg

you; do not humiliate me by staying to hear cries of fear and pain."

"I go," said Perseus, "but to slay this beast, and when I have slain him, I shall claim you as my wife."

Then he lifted her face to his and kissed her with a laugh of joy and flew upward, while Andromeda crouched on the rocks, tremblingly awaiting that which might befall her.

The sea-monster came coasting along like a huge black galley, lazily breasting the waves. His great sides were fringed with clustering shells and seaweed, and the water gurgled in and out of his wide jaws as he rolled along, dripping and glistening in the beams of the morning sun.

When he spied Andromeda he shot forward to take his prey, while the waves foamed white behind him and the fish fled leaping before him. Then like a shooting star from the height of the upper air fell Perseus, shouting to Andromeda to close her eyes. Then there was a silence and she

looked up to see Perseus refastening his magic wallet and instead of the monster a long, low black rock with the sea rippling quietly around it.

Many of the people had hidden themselves along the top of the cliffs, watching sorrowfully for the death of their beloved princess, and they came out with joy as Perseus leaped to the cliffs with Andromeda in his arms. A fleet-footed runner was sent at once to carry the glad news of the rescue to Cepheus and Cassiopoeia who sat in sackcloth and ashes in the palace. When they neared the city a joyous band came dancing and singing to greet Andromeda and her hero. There was music of harp and cymbals for all felt as if one who had been dead had returned to life.

Cepheus, the king, gladly welcomed Perseus as his son-in-law and made a great marriage feast that lasted seven days, and there was great happiness. He offered Perseus half his kingdom if he would stay. But Perseus loved his own land too dearly to

abide, even as a king, in any other. After the bridal festivities had ended, he hired Phœnicians from Tyre, the greatest ship-builders of the world, and they cut cedars and built him a noble galley; Perseus himself helped to pitch it, and to paint its sides with gold and vermilion. When it was finished he placed Andromeda in it with all her rich dowry of gold and jewels, and shawls, and spices from the East, and great was the weeping as they rowed away. But the remembrance of Perseus' brave deed was left behind and Andromeda's rock may still be seen.

They rowed westward across the Sea of Crete, till they came to the Ægean Sea and the pleasant isles of Greece, and his own island of Seriphos, where good Dictys, his foster-father, and his mother embraced him with tears, for it was seven years since he had gone away.

Leaving Andromeda in their care, Perseus went at once to the king's palace. When he entered the hall it was full of noise, for

Polydectes was entertaining his guests at a boisterous feast; the harpers were harping and the revelers shouting. Perseus stood on the threshold and called the king by name. No one recognized him at first, for he had gone forth a boy and returned a man. His eyes shone like an eagle's as he stood before them, a fearless hero.

Then the king knew him.

"Ah, foundling," he jeered, "so you have dared to return without fulfilling your promise. Where is the Gorgon's head?"

"It is here, Your Majesty," replied Perseus, his eyes meeting those of the king; "here in this wallet."

"Let us see it," cried Polydectes. "I cannot believe that you speak the truth until I have seen the head."

"For," he thought, "no man could have seen the Gorgons and still live."

"Yes," shouted the guests, "show us the head! Show us the head!"

A feeling of pity and sorrow came over Perseus.

"I am loath to show it to you," he said.

"Coward," shouted the people, "it is a trick. He has no head of Medusa."

"Show it to us at once," commanded the king, in a deep, stern voice, with a wave of his hand; "at once, I say, or lose your own head."

Still Perseus hesitated.

"This instant," cried the king, "or prepare to die."

"Behold it, then," cried Perseus in a voice like the blast of a trumpet.

Then closing his own eyes, he drew out the head and held it high in the air. Pale and stiff grew Polydectes and his guests as they stared into that dreadful face. They tried to rise in vain; where there had been life and gayety was silence and a ring of cold gray stones. There they sat with their glasses before them on the board, till the rafters rotted away above their heads and the walls behind their backs, and the tables and couches crumbled, and the grass sprang up about their feet.

Perseus had many other adventures, not to be told here, and he and the beautiful Andromeda lived long and happily; it is said they had seven children, four sons and three daughters, and lived to a good old age.

The ancient Greeks say that Athene took them up into the sky with Cepheus and Cassiopoeia, where, on starlit nights they are still to be seen: Cassiopoeia in her ivory chair plaiting her glorious tresses; Perseus, holding up the head of Medusa, with Andromeda close beside him spreading her slender white arms above her head as she stood when chained to the rock waiting for the sea-monster; the Nymphs, whom we call the Pleiades, are near at hand, and their dragon twines around the North Star.

Adapted from *The Gorgon's Head,*
by NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, and
Perseus, by CHARLES KINGSLEY

THE ROYAL FAMILY

THOUGH Cassiopoeia, the queen, seated in her W-like chair, is to be seen throughout the year, circling the North Star on the opposite side from the Big Dipper, autumn is the best time in which to look for the whole family.

Cepheus, the king, an imperfect square with an isosceles triangle using one of its sides for a base, lies partly in the Milky Way between Cassiopoeia and the head of the Dragon.

Almost overhead, slightly to the southeast, the great square of Pegasus is the most conspicuous object. The northeastern corner of the square is marked by Alpheratz, the first star in the constellation of Andromeda who sprawls toward her rescuer, Perseus, in the northeast. There is a beautiful nebula in Andromeda, the first one to be discovered and named. As long ago as 986 A.D. it

PERSEUS

was called the "Little Cloud." While visible to the naked eye, an opera glass will bring it out far more clearly.

Perseus is easily recognized by the graceful curve of stars known as the "segment of Perseus," and by the brilliant Algol

which shines in the head of Medusa, held in the left hand of the hero. Algol is also called the "ghoul" and the "demon." It is an unusually interesting star to watch from night to night, as it varies in brightness from second to fourth magnitude in a few hours, and then returns to its greatest brilliance and shines steadily for almost three days when the change again takes place.

TO PLAY WITH STARS

The way to play with stars is just to lie
Flat on your back where forest trees grow high
Outlining bay and sea
Where golden boats may sail entrancingly!

The pageant of the stars, all through the night,
Moves with a gold and red and diamond light,
Lured on by music sweet
Where Vega passes with her shapely feet.

Bright barges launch themselves from ancient
lore,
Polaris, ringmaster, remains ashore
Presenting Hercules,
Andromeda and dainty Pleiades.

Ah, golden boats, so steadily they move
The guidance of a Father's hand they prove,
In everlasting care,
And who can doubt His presence, here or there?

The way to play with stars is just to lie
Flat on your back where forest trees grow high.
You face eternal joys
Who learn to count the stars your friendly toys.

A Group of Golden Eaglet Girl Scouts

THE STEED OF THE MUSES

A GREEK LEGEND

WHEN Perseus cut off the head of Medusa with its snaky locks, from the drops of blood that fell upon the sand, there sprang a marvelous horse. A horse that was dazzlingly white, with the wings of a great bird; a horse that could travel through the air as easily as along the ground. On its first flight, with unerring instinct this magnificent creature winged his way to the garden of the Muses on Mount Helicon in Greece.

This garden was said to be the most beautiful in all the world, with the cool green of trees and twining vines, with flowers of every hue in the soft grass; and the sweetest songsters of all the birds built their nests in the trees, that they might carry far and wide the music inspired by the Muses. When Pegasus first came to the garden, it lacked

but one thing, a spring of water, but when his hoof-print broke through the soil, a fountain shot up into the air, and to this clear and bubbling water he returned often to refresh himself. It was said that whoever drank of this magic fountain gained an insight into beauty and purity and truth that was beyond that given to ordinary men, and poets traveled from far and near to drink at this source of inspiration, and now and then one of them would be lucky enough to leap upon the back of Pegasus, who would soar with him to the stars, and these became the great poets and seers of their time.

The most famous of those who rode upon the back of Pegasus was a Greek named Bellerophon. He rode, however, not so much to perfect his own verse, as to endeavor to rid the world of a most terrible evil, a monster called the Chimæra, with three heads—a lion's, a goat's, and a dragon's—and with a body the forepart of which was lion, the middle, goat, and the tail that

of a huge dragon. This terrible monster breathed forth smoke and flames, devouring or destroying everything within miles. For years it had devastated the country of Lycia, and many brave youths had risked and lost their lives endeavoring to kill it.

Bellerophon was one of the bravest men of his time and he resolved to attempt this task, even though so many had failed. He pondered night and day the best way to accomplish so difficult a feat. One night as he slept he had a strange dream. He thought that a beautiful woman stood beside his couch. She was dressed like a warrior, with a glistening helmet on her head, and a shield upon her arm. Her eyes were gray and full of wisdom. In her hand she carried a golden bridle studded with jewels.

"Bellerophon," she said in a rich deep voice, "I know the task which you long to accomplish. You will need patience as well as skill and bravery. Take this bridle and go to the spring of Pirene on Mount Helicon.

PEGASUS

Hide in the bushes until Pegasus, the winged horse, drinks at the fountain, then quickly place this bit in his mouth. Do not let go of the ends of the bridle but fearlessly leap upon his back. He will obey your lightest touch, you will be as one person, and his quickness and agility will enable you to conquer the monstrous Chimæra."

When Bellerophon awoke, he thought of

his dream, and to his amazement saw beside him on the floor the jewel-studded, golden bridle. He realized that Pallas Athene herself had visited him and given him this assistance, so taking up the bridle he started at once for the Fountain of Pirene. It was midday when he reached the garden on the side of Mount Helicon nearest Corinth, and many were refreshing themselves at the sparkling waters. There were men and maidens, mothers with their children, and farmers with their horses. When they saw the golden bridle, they gathered around Bellerophon in curiosity.

"You must own a very fine horse," said an old man, "if it is worthy of such a bridle."

"It is for Pegasus, the horse of the Muses. I am told I shall find him here," said Bellerophon, seriously. But the villagers laughed.

"The Muses! The winged horse!" they cried. "These are tales for children. We come here often at noontime, and we have

seen nothing of Pegasus, and heard no heavenly music. These are old wives' tales."

But when most of them had gone back to their work in the fields below, a lovely maiden, scarcely more than a child, stood beside him and said timidly, "Once when I sat here by the fountain, half asleep, dreaming such pleasant day-dreams, I thought I saw a great white horse with outstretched wings reflected in this pool. But I was frightened and ran away."

"And I," said a boy, shyly, drawing a gleaming white feather from behind him, "only yesterday at dawn I came to draw water here, and the birds were singing more beautifully than I had ever heard them. And when I came within sight of the fountain, I saw a huge creature, larger than any earthly bird, fling itself into the air, and this feather floated down."

"I shall watch here," said Bellerophon, "until I, too, have seen him."

He watched faithfully for many days and he began to realize why Athene had warned

him of his need of patience as well as courage. Once or twice the winged horse approached the garden, only to fly off in haste before some loud-mouthed yokel calling to his companions as they climbed the hill. And the villagers would laugh and tease Bellerophon for his faith in such an improbable creature as a horse with wings gigantic enough to lift it from the ground. Rich men offered him huge sums for his gorgeous bridle, and shrugged their shoulders in scorn at his folly in refusing them.

At last one day just at dawn, when the sky was aglow with color, Bellerophon hid, trembling with excitement, in the bushes near the fountain, for he heard the rush of mighty wings through the sky, and then, as he waited, his long patience was rewarded, and the great, glorious steed stood by the margin of the spring. For a minute the beautiful animal stood with his head high as if listening; Bellerophon held his breath. The only sounds were the rustling of the leaves, the musical murmur of the water; then a bird

began to sing, and Pegasus bent his proudly arching neck and drank long and full. Then Bellerophon crept out and as the horse raised his head, thrust the bit between his teeth, and bridle in hand was upon his back, almost before he was aware of the man's touch.

Pegasus sprang into the air and flew straight toward the sun, then he turned and twisted, and leaped high into the air, only to drop down again like a falling stone, but though the world seemed to revolve around them, Bellerophon kept his seat, until at length the horse realized that he had found his master. Gradually he became calm and allowed Bellerophon to ride him where he would.

Northward they flew to Lycia, until they hovered over the cave where the great monster, the Chimæra, lived. Again there was need of patience, for it was twenty-four hours before it came crawling out, belching clouds of ill-smelling smoke, and horrible roars of warning. As it started down the

THEY HOVERED OVER THE CAVE WHERE THE
GREAT MONSTER LIVED

hillside toward the village Bellerophon and Pegasus flew down toward it, and the battle began. Pegasus seemed filled with the zest of battle, and swooped down upon the awful creature, and by his swift darting and turning, enabled Bellerophon to get in a sword thrust, and then escape rapidly from the flames that issued from its mouth. The Chimæra reared up to its full height and clawed the air, but the daring steed and rider were too swift for it, the rocks on the hillside were crumbled into dust by the beating of its great tail, but all in vain did it shoot forth its fiery breath, hoping to scorch with flame, or poison with its venomous smoke, its valiant adversaries.

Bellerophon rained blow after blow at the terrible creature until its goat's head hung limp at its side; but the loss of one head seemed to cause the other two heads to become even more ferocious; and the pain endured by the Chimæra made its roar more deafening and terrifying than before. Again and again the gallant horse carried the dauntless war-

rior to the attack. The dragon's head fell to the ground, the creature grew feebler; then Bellerophon put up his sword and strung his bow and an arrow winged its way into the lion's breast. For the last time the awful Chimæra clawed the air, then its dead body fell to the ground and rolled crashing down the mountainside, like a great landslide, carrying trees and rocks with it into the valley below.

Some say that Bellerophon, having completed his task, gave Pegasus his freedom, and that the great horse, having been mastered was loath to leave him. Others say that Bellerophon's soul was so seared by the horror of the Chimæra that he resolved never to return to this world again. But as he flew upward, Jupiter, realizing that such a hero was needed still in his own sphere, sent a gadfly to sting Pegasus. The pain was so sharp that the horse reared suddenly, casting Bellerophon back to the earth.

Pegasus soared on into the heavens, where he is still to be seen among the constellations.

Bellerophon, though blinded by his fall, lived to be an old, old man, and, because of his wisdom and insight, his fellowmen consulted him and relied upon him for advice and inspiration. But he himself was lonely, because having drunk deep of the waters of Pirene and ridden aloft among the stars on the back of the steed of the Muses, his own thoughts were higher and more beautiful than those of other men.

PEGASUS

PEGASUS, the winged horse, is shown on star maps flying across the sky in an up-side-down position; his forefeet paw the air just south of Deneb in Cygnus, and his nostrils sniff at Delphinus.

The Great Square of Pegasus is a landmark among the stars, it covers a huge space in the heavens between Andromeda in the east and Cygnus, Delphinus, and Aquila, to the west. A line drawn from the North Star through the star at the top of Cassiopoeia's chair and extended an equal distance will touch Alpheratz, the largest star in this constellation of Pegasus, at the northeastern corner of the square. This star also marks the head of Andromeda.

PEGASUS IN POUND

Once into a quiet village,
Without haste and without heed,
In the golden prime of morning,
Strayed the poet's winged steed.

It was autumn, and incessant
Piped the quails from shocks and sheaves,
And, like living coals, the apples
Burned among the withering leaves.

Loud the clamorous bell was ringing
From its belfry gaunt and grim;
'Twas the daily call to labor,
Not a triumph meant for him.

Not the less he saw the landscape,
In its gleaming vapor veiled;
Not the less he breathed the odors
That the dying leaves exhaled.

Thus, upon the village common,
By the school-boys he was found;
And the wisemen in their wisdom,
Put him straightway in the pound.

Then the sombre village crier,
Ringing loud his brazen bell,
Wandered down the street proclaiming
There was an estray to sell.

And the curious country people,
Rich and poor, and young and old,
Came in haste to see this wondrous
Winged steed with mane of gold.

Thus the day passed, and the evening
Fell, with vapors cold and dim;
But it brought no food nor shelter,
Brought no straw nor stall, for him.

Patiently, and still expectant,
Looked he through the wooden bars,
Saw the moon rise o'er the landscape,
Saw the tranquil patient stars;

Till at length the bell at midnight
Sounded from its dark abode,
And from out a neighboring farmyard,
Loud the cock Alectryon crowed.

Then with nostrils wide distended,
Breaking from his iron chain,
And unfolding far his pinions,
To those stars he soared again.

On the morrow, when the village
Woke to all its toil and care,
Lo! the stranger had departed,
And they knew not when nor where.

But they found, upon the greensward
Where his struggling hoofs had trod,
Pure and bright, a fountain flowing
From the hoof-marks in the sod.

From that hour, the fount unfailing,
Gladdens the whole region round,
Strengthening all who drink its waters,
While it soothes them with its sound.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

THE TWELVE LABORS OF HERCULES

AMONG all the heroes of Greece there was none stronger and more courageous than Hercules. He was a child of but eight months old, when two enormous serpents crept up into his cradle, and, before his mother's agonized shriek was heard by his father, Hercules had seized the serpents' necks in his baby hand and had squeezed them with such force, that when his father came rushing in with drawn sword, both snakes lay limp and dead.

But through misadventure, because of an act committed while insane, Hercules was bound over to his uncle Eurystheus to do any twelve labors that Eurystheus might exact. If however, he performed the tasks successfully, it was promised that not only would his evil deed be wiped out, but that he would be translated to the skies and given

Hebe, the handmaiden of the Gods, as wife.

Now Eurystheus was a cowardly, selfish fellow, and meanly jealous of the great strength of Hercules, so he resolved to set such difficult tasks for him that his nephew would never live to complete them. For days he pondered and then sent for Hercules.

"I have thought of a deed worthy of a hero," he said. "The lion of Nemea is the terror of all the countryside. Go forth and kill him and bring me his skin as proof of his death."

Hercules took his bow and arrows and his massive club and started at once for Nemea. When he came near, he found a country man who was able to guide him to the cave of the lion, but as soon as he had pointed it out to Hercules, he fled from it in mortal fear. It was several days before Hercules saw the lion crawling out of his den giving a roar that reverberated among the rocks and crags of the mountainside.

He shot an arrow right at the animal's heart, but the arrow glanced aside and Hercules realized that the lion's skin was proof against his darts. With a roar the enraged beast leaped at the man's throat, but Hercules dropped his weapons and seized the animal's throat with his mighty hands. Then came a terrific struggle. The lion twisted and turned, and growled and roared, but Hercules held with a merciless grip. Though he was thrown to the ground and against the rocks until he was battered and bruised, gradually the lion grew feeble, gasped for breath and with a shudder lay dead.

The country people were astounded when they saw Hercules striding along with the huge beast thrown over his shoulder. They hailed him as a mighty hero and the saver of countless lives; they beseeched him to live among them and keep them safe from attack, but Hercules told them of his bondage and returned to Mycenae, the home of Eurystheus.

Eurystheus was not at all delighted with

his prowess; in fact, he was frightened by it, so frightened that he hid himself in a tower of solid brass and sent his servants to give Hercules the orders for his second labor.

This was to kill the Hydra, a fearful snake with nine human heads, eight of which were mortal and the ninth immortal, which lived in a lake not far from Mycenae. Hercules stopped long enough to strip the skin from the lion and, knowing it to be arrow proof, he wrapped it around his body, and for the rest of his life wore it as armor. On this quest Hercules took with him a faithful friend, Iolaos by name. They drove along the roads lined with olive groves until they came to the swampy land about the lake, where they knew the Hydra lay concealed. Hercules shot burning arrows into the swamp until the great water-snake crawled out and attacked him. Hercules met it with his sword and the battle began, a terrible one, for as fast as Hercules cut off one of the heads two would grow out. And with

the Hydra twined around one of his legs, a great crab crawled out of the slime and began pinching and tearing at the other. Hercules beat down the crab with his club. Then a thought came to him.

"Iolaos," he cried, "bring a burning brand, and as I cut off a head, put fire at the neck that nothing can grow out."

In a flash Iolaos obeyed, and, though faint from loss of blood and from intense pain, Hercules fought on until the eight mortal heads were gone, then they buried the body and the deathless head and placed a large stone above it. Eurystheus had, of course, no thanks or praise for the deed accomplished; but now that the place was freed from the menace of the Hydra, many people flocked to it and drained the swamp and built houses upon the reclaimed land, and they blessed the name of Hercules as a hero of heroes.

The next task seemed to Eurystheus an impossible one.

"Bring me," he commanded, "the golden hind of Diana that roams the woods of Arcadia. Do not dare to kill her but bring her to me alive."

This hind was a fleet and beautiful animal which Diana had marked as her own by giving her horns of gold that earthly huntsmen might recognize her and be warned against harming her. Hercules knew that Eurystheus had set this task for him, hoping that he might offend Diana and cause her to strike him dead. It took him a whole year to capture the hind. Day in, day out, he pursued her, up into the mountains and down into the valleys, through the underbrush, across streams, and over the cliffs. After a chase that seemed endless, he cornered the graceful animal. Tying her slender legs together, he threw her across his shoulders and started toward Mycenae, when Diana appeared before him in anger.

"Rash mortal," she cried, "do you know whose hind it is, you have dared to capture?"

"Gracious huntress," he answered, "I know this hind is yours, but you know of my bondage. By no will of my own have I taken this hind. It was at the command of Eurystheus. This is the third of the twelve labors I must perform for him."

When Diana heard him, she knew the truth of his words and transferred her wrath to the stupid Eurystheus.

The next deed required of Hercules was to capture the wild boar of the Erymanthos Mountains, so once more he wrapped himself in his lion's skin and went in search of the fierce beast which was devastating the country and terrorizing its inhabitants. On his way he fought a mighty battle with those strange creatures, half man, half horse, the Centaurs, a battle from which he was lucky enough to escape with his life. When he finally captured the boar, it was so high in the mountains that the ground was covered with such deep snow that the boar could not run in it, and Hercules was able to throw a net over it and carry it down to Mycenae

alive. The cowardly Eurystheus, it is said, hid himself in a huge brass bowl just within the city gates, when he saw Hercules approaching. Now as Hercules entered the city, the boar was so heavy, that seeing the bowl of brass, he threw the boar into it for safe-keeping. And Eurystheus, though the animal was so entangled in the net that it could do no harm, came scrambling out of the bowl in most undignified fear and haste.

The next task sounded easier than the others. Eurystheus ordered him to clean out the stables of a neighboring king, Augeias by name. This sounded like a simple if dirty job. But when Hercules saw the stables he was aghast. They were miles and miles long, and though thousands of cattle had been housed in them, they had never been cleaned out, and were so full of filth that it was impossible to drive any cows into them. Hercules looked at them and then at the two rivers that flowed at the foot of Mount Kronos where the stables stood.

"An easy task at length," he laughed, "I shall have them cleaned in a day."

"Boastful one," jeered the king, "a tenth of all my cows are yours if you can fulfill such a rash promise."

Then to the amazement of the king, Hercules cut the channels of the rivers so that the waters rushed through the Augean stables, and, in a twinkling of an eye, the dirt was cleaned away. It is said that the king refused to give up the cows he had promised, but Hercules cared little about that; his interest in life was to accomplish the great deeds of a hero, not to reap rewards.

In the pleasant land of Arcadia there was a most unpleasant lake called Stymphalos, or rather the lake itself was well enough, but it was inhabited by an awful flock of birds, whose claws were of iron, and whose feathers were sharp as arrows. They were so strong that they attacked men with impunity. They were the terror of those who lived near Stymphalos, and their mad

shrieks and calls made all who heard them tremble with alarm.

As the sixth labor, Eurystheus directed Hercules to clear the forest of these Harpie-like birds. With his bow and arrows the hero went at once to the lakeside, but the trees were so thick and gloomy that he could not see the birds though he could hear their piercing cries. As he sat by the lake, Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, stood beside him.

"Hercules," she said, "only a noise more terrifying than their own can drive these birds away. That noise will be so horrible that a man might pause before sounding it. Are you valiant enough to take this rattle and loose its racket upon the air?"

"Give it to me," cried Hercules, and springing up he took the huge rattle from her hand, and shook it with all his strength. Such a riotous, rumbling, rattling sound as issued from his hand, nearly caused him to drop the fiendish instrument. He trembled at the noise, but then he grasped the rattle

more firmly and shook it more violently than before so that the noise was more terrifying than ever. The birds flew up in fear, and as they left the cover of the trees, Hercules dropped the rattle and shot arrow after arrow at them, till the feathers fell from the birds like flakes in a heavy snowstorm, and the birds which were not killed fled before the noise and never again returned to Stymphalos.

Meanwhile in Mycenae, Eurystheus was racking his brain to devise more and more dangerous labors for Hercules. On the Island of Crete, off the southern coast of Greece, lived Minos, the king. It was his duty to sacrifice to Neptune, the ruler of oceans, anything that came to Crete out of the sea. One day a magnificent bull rose out of the waters; it was so much larger and finer than any of Minos' cattle that he desired to keep it, so he had a great pen built for the bull and sacrificed a smaller animal to Neptune. Neptune was furious and caused the bull to go mad, so that no one

dared approach him. As the seventh task, Eurystheus ordered Hercules to bring the bull from Crete to Mycenae.

Hercules with his usual direct simplicity went at once to Minos and asked permission to carry off the bull. The king and his subjects looked at him as if they thought him as mad as the bull.

"The beast is yours," said Minos, "if you can handle him."

All the inhabitants of Crete followed him and stood outside the bull-pen to see what was going to happen, and both men and maids tried to dissuade Hercules from entering the pen and risking his life. They watched anxiously as Hercules vaulted the fence. The bull lowered his head to rush at the intruder, but Hercules did not await attack, but rushed at the savage animal and grasping him by the horns gave a twist of his mighty arms that cast the brute to the ground, and before the bull could regain his feet, Hercules had him roped and tied.

In Thrace, to the north of Greece, which, in the times of Hercules, was known as the Land of War, there was a fierce and evil king named Diomedes who kept a breed of man-eating horses as fierce and wild as himself. The next task set by Eurystheus was for Hercules to bring a herd of these horses to the Mycenaen stables. Hercules knew this would be impossible for him to do single-handed so he asked a number of his friends, men as valiant as himself, to help him. There was a great battle fought, and Diomedes and many of his warriors, and, alas, many of Hercules' companions were slain, but the herd was finally brought to Eurystheus. But he was so frightened by them that he ordered them to be freed and driven into the forests of Arcadia where it is said they were devoured by mountain wolves.

Eurystheus had one daughter who longed to possess the girdle worn by Hippolyte the Queen of the Amazons, a tribe of handsome but war-like women. This girdle had been given to Hippolyte by Mars himself in rec-

ognition of her beauty and valor. It was said that any one who wore this girdle would be absolutely without fear. When his daughter begged him to procure this girdle Eurystheus was delighted for at last, he felt, here was an adventure from which Hercules could never return.

Hercules manned a ship and set sail for the Black Sea, and after wandering about for some years, came to the country of the Amazons. When Hippolyte heard of the arrival of his ship upon her shores, she went down boldly to the coast to find out who the strangers might be and from whence they came. She and Hercules faced each other boldly, and each appreciated the bravery and courage of the other.

"My cousin, the princess of my country, desires your famous girdle," said Hercules.

"You are a dauntless man to come into my domain," said Hippolyte; "my maiden warriors are more to be feared than armed men. But I respect your frankness and fearlessness. Here is the girdle."

Then a very sad thing happened. Through treachery the Amazons were led to believe that their queen was being carried off, and seizing their arms, they mounted their horses and galloped toward the ship. When Hercules saw them coming with drawn spears, he believed himself betrayed by the queen and killed her and took the girdle. Then he and his men put the rest of the Amazons to flight and sailed for home.

Once again Eurystheus was full of fear and astonishment to find that Hercules had accomplished an all but impossible adventure. He thought long and seriously before deciding upon the tenth labor. At length he chanced upon one from which there seemed little possibility of return. Iberia, which we now call Spain, was the end of the world to the Greeks, but beyond it lay an island on which lived a monster named Geryon. Geryon's body was as large as three ordinary men's, and he had three heads and three pairs of arms and six legs, and his strength was the strength of three. On this

island he had a herd of cattle as red as the sun when it sets, and these cattle were guarded by a trusty herdsman and a three-headed dog.

"Bring me the cattle of Geryon," was Eurystheus' tenth command.

Even to reach Iberia was a journey to appall the bravest of men. There were no roads, and the way led through deserts and wild forests inhabited by savage tribes. When Hercules finally reached the open ocean, he set up two high pillars of black stone as a monument. These pillars stand where the Atlantic and the Mediterranean meet; they are still called the pillars of Hercules, though we know them better as the Rocks of Ceutra in Africa and Gibraltar on the European side.

Hercules could see the island in the distance but there seemed to be no way of reaching it, until a clanging sound at the foot of the cliff on which he stood caused him to look down. There, beating against the rock, was a huge golden cup. Hercules sprang

into this unusual boat, which he felt had been sent him by Fate, and soon found himself at the island of Geryon. As he landed the herdsman and the two-headed dog rushed at him, but he easily disposed of them with blows from his massive club, and drove the cattle toward the boat. But now Geryon leaped upon him and forced him to fight for his very life. It was nip and tuck between them but in the end Hercules was victorious. The voyage back to Iberia was made in safety, but to drive the cattle back to Greece was no easy matter. Hercules was attacked by wild beasts and by even wilder men. On the seven hills of Rome his cattle were nearly stolen from him by Cacus, a crafty and wicked giant, but Hercules fought his way through and reached Mycenae at length.

Two more labors must Eurystheus devise. It was known that somewhere to westward lay the Garden of the Hesperides, in which grew a marvelous tree whose fruit were apples of gold. Many craved these apples but

the tree was guarded by a great dragon with a hundred sleepless eyes.

"Three golden apples from the Garden of the Hesperides," was the king's next demand.

And on this quest Hercules traveled farther than ever before and had many strange and fearsome adventures. It took him a long time to discover any one who could give any suggestions for even reaching the Garden. Finally he reached the garden of the water nymphs, who gathered around him and when they heard of his quest, begged him to turn from it and stay with them, but when they found he could not stay, they gave him all the aid they could.

"We have heard of the Garden of the Hesperides," they said; "we do not know just where it lies, but go to the sands below the cliffs, there you may find the Old Man of the Sea. He knows everything and perhaps will help you."

"When you see him," said one of the nymphs, "catch him and hold him, do not

let him out of your hands until he tells you what you want to know."

Hercules thanked them and was starting off, when another called to him, "Remember, no matter what happens, hold on to the Old Man of the Sea until he tells you where the Garden is."

Hercules clambered down the cliff and found, asleep upon the sands, a strange creature, whom he at once recognized as the Old Man of the Sea. He was the oldest thing Hercules had ever seen. He was like a weatherbeaten spar cast up by the waves; his beard was like dry grayish-green seaweed, his body seemed covered with barnacles, and his fingers and toes were webbed. Hercules crept up to him and seized him by an arm and a leg.

"Tell me where the Garden of the Hesperides is to be found," he cried, as the Old Man opened his eyes with a cry of fright. But now it was Hercules' turn to cry out in surprise, for instead of a man he found himself grasping a struggling stag. He re-

membered the nymphs' warning, however, and held on—not to a stag, but to a huge sea-bird beating its wings in his face; then in turn he held a fish, a serpent, Geryon kicking with five legs at the leg in Hercules' grasp, then a three-headed dog; no matter how astonishing the change, Hercules held fast and squeezed hard, until at last the Old Man puffing and gasping took his own shape again, and gave him the directions for finding the Garden.

Even then Hercules must pass through the kingdom of a dreadful giant who slew all travelers in his domain. Hercules wrestled with him for hours, until he realized that each time he threw his adversary to the ground the giant gained in strength, so Hercules instead of throwing him down lifted him over his head and holding him away from the strength-giving earth slowly squeezed the breath out of his body.

Finally he reached the mountain on which stood Atlas holding the sky upon his shoulders. When he asked him to direct him to

the island where the golden apples grew, Atlas tried to dissuade him from going there.

"I must go," said Hercules, "I am bound by Fate to my uncle Eurystheus, whose orders I must obey until I have completed twelve labors; this is the eleventh."

"You seem a brave little fellow," said the mighty Atlas, "but this is an impossible journey for a mortal, though it would be but a half day's stroll for me. Gladly would I get the apples for you, if it were not for holding up this sky."

"Perhaps I could hold it for you, for a few hours," suggested Hercules.

"A capital idea," cried Atlas, "climb up yonder peak and stand upon the summit, and I'll shift the sky to your back."

So Hercules climbed to the top of the highest neighboring mountain and made a pad of his lion skin, and Atlas carefully shifted his burden to the hero's shoulders. The great giant, free after thousands of years, was like a boy set free from school. He laughed and capered about until the folk in the valleys

below thought a storm was rumbling in the clouds that hid the mountain tops from their sight. Then he stepped off into the ocean, which barely came to his waist, and went striding away, ten miles at each step.

Hercules watched him until he was out of sight. At first the sky seemed easy to bear, but the hero's strong shoulders were used to being held upright, and soon began to ache in the cramped position. It was a great relief when he saw Atlas striding back, juggling the golden apples as he came.

"Here you are," he roared in his deep voice. "It's a pity you couldn't have seen the beauty of a whole tree of them. A pleasant excursion it has been."

"Thank you a thousand times," said Hercules, "and now I'll be off."

"Not so fast," said Atlas. "I've been thinking that now that I'm free, it would be a pity not to see a little more of the world, and I've decided to take these apples to your uncle before burdening myself with the sky again."

HE SAW ATLAS STRIDING BACK, JUGGLING THE GOLDEN APPLES

"What," cried Hercules, in dismay, "do you expect me to stand here forever?"

"No, no," said Atlas, "I'll return before the century is out. A husky little fellow like you will get used to it in a little while."

Hercules gave a twitch of despair that sent a shower of stars tumbling out of the sky.

"Here, here," cried the giant, "I haven't been as careless as that in a thousand years."

"Well," said Hercules, "my lion skin slipped. Take back the sky for a moment while I rearrange it."

The good-natured but thick-witted old giant threw the three golden apples to the ground and took his burden upon his shoulders again. And Hercules picked up the apples and made off in haste, paying no heed to the thunders of protest that Atlas sent after him.

Now eleven labors had been successfully accomplished and Eurystheus was at his wits' end to devise a final one that would surely rid him once and for all of Hercules.

For he was full of fear as to the punishment Hercules might vent upon him once he was free again. Cowards always fear those whom they have ill-treated, though heroes always have so many great deeds to encompass that they seldom stoop to revenge. Eurystheus felt that he had sent Hercules to every known, as well as to every unknown country, of which he had ever heard, and against the most terrible creatures in existence, and now he decided to send him to the Land of the Dead. So he ordered Hercules to go down through the bottomless pit into Hades and bring back Cerberus, the three-headed dog that guards the gates of the lower regions.

Bravery is unafraid even of death, and Hercules passed the boundaries of earth, crossed the River Styx, and penetrated the Halls of Death and faced King Pluto.

"A boon I ask of you, O King," he said boldly: "let me take your three-headed dog to Mycenae; only thus may I free myself from bondage to my uncle, Eurystheus."

Now the strength and courage of the hero were known even in the nether regions, and the shades gathered to gaze in admiration upon one who had done such deeds of valor, and who dared to stand face to face with Pluto. Even the Ruler of Hades was moved by his bravery.

"If you can take Cerberus without using a weapon," he said, "I shall put no obstacle in your way."

"My hands shall be my weapons," said Hercules, and going to the great gates, he threw his lion skin over the dog's three heads and grasping the struggling creature in his arms, bore the burden across the Styx in Charon's boat which almost sank beneath the heaviest load it had ever borne across that dark and sluggish stream. Hercules dragged Cerberus, still struggling, through the dismal tunnel that led to the upper world and then unwrapped the lion skin from about the heads, but Cerberus was so frightened by the sunlight, which he had never seen before, that he came to heel like

HERCULES

any well trained dog at his master's word, and followed Hercules wherever he went. But a foam dropped from his mouth and wherever it touched the earth a poisonous plant sprang up.

Eurystheus was so frightened when he saw Hercules approaching with the three-headed monster behind him, that he threw himself to the ground and groveled before

his heroic nephew, promising him anything he would, if he would only take the fearsome beast back where he belonged—which Hercules did right willingly, and went forth once more a free man, having performed the twelve most arduous labors ever exacted of mortal man. And to this day he shines in the night sky as a witness to the fortitude and courage of heroic manhood.

HERCULES

DURING the summer months the constellation of the kneeling hero is to be seen almost directly overhead. On old star maps the figure is usually shown with knees bent as if he were struggling. Over his shoulders is the skin of the dreadful lion which he slew in the Nemean forests; his arms are lifted above his head, in the right hand is an enormous club, and his left is on Cerberus, his three-headed dog who guarded the gates of Hades. It is one of the oldest of star groups. Centuries before the Greeks named it in honor of the strength and courage of Hercules, the early Phœnicians worshiped it as the God Melkarth, the Phantom Kneeler. A line drawn from Vega westward to Arcturus passes across his knees; his right foot is on the head of the Dragon which winds between the Great and Little Bears. Between the keystone which forms his body

and the kite-shaped constellation of Boötes is the Corona Borealis.

This constellation, though it has no large stars in it, is most interesting to observe through a telescope because of its many star clusters, double stars, and nebulæ.

THE DOLPHIN WHO SAVED ARION

ALMOST as great a musician as Orpheus himself, was Arion the poet of Lesbos. It is said that when he sang the trees and flowers forgot to grow, the brooks stopped running, and the birds and beasts gathered to listen. Often he journeyed to distant lands at the invitation of great kings and rulers and was rewarded with rich gifts for his songs.

Once when he was returning from Italy to Corinth, the hold of the ship on which he traveled was so stored with gold and silver and spices, that the captain and his crew were filled with covetousness and plotted to kill Arion and seize his wealth for themselves.

"Let us throw this fellow into the sea," they said. "We can find better use than he for his treasure chests."

"Let him jump overboard," said one, "here, far from land. No one will ever be the wiser."

"An excellent plan," said the captain; "we will not kill him, it will be his own deed."

So he called Arion to him and informed him of their decision. Arion saw that it was useless to plead for his life, so he asked for a last favor.

"Let me stand upon the poop," he begged, "and sing and play my last song."

They considered for a moment.

"He thinks to charm us from our purpose," muttered one of the crew.

"Nothing could charm me from my share of his gold," growled another.

"You may sing as you will," said the captain. "Do not think your song will change our purpose."

Wrapped in a mantle of deep purple, with the bay leaves of a poet in his hair, Arion stood upon the poop and struck a chord upon his lyre and sang a low sweet lay like the

last notes of a dying swan. As he had hoped, the dwellers in the sea heard his song and fishes of all kinds swam close about the vessel eager to hear more. Arion waited until a school of dolphins came turning and tumbling through the waves and when they were quite close, he cast himself into the water.

The sailors, thinking that they had seen the last of him, and full of triumph and joy over the great wealth that was now theirs, scarcely glanced after him, but hoisted the sails and steered for Corinth.

But Arion had not sunk below the waves as they supposed. As he leaped, a dolphin had arched his back and caught the poet before he touched the water, and the other dolphins formed a protecting ring around them, hiding Arion from those who wished his death.

The dolphins swam swiftly toward Corinth, as Arion sang to them songs of coral and pearl strewn caves far below them, and of green-haired laughing mermaids on hidden beaches. Spurred by his music the dol-

phins moved so surely and rapidly that they reached land long before the ship had made her port.

Arion hastened at once to the court of Periander, Tyrant of Corinth, but his tale of being rescued by a dolphin sounded so extraordinary that at first even the king refused to credit it. But when the ship reached Corinth, Periander sent for the captain and the crew and questioned them.

"Where is Arion?" he asked. "He had orders to return with you."

"Alack," said the captain, "so popular is he in Italy, that he loves it more than Corinth. He refused to come home with us. He told us he wanted to live there for the rest of his life."

At that, Arion dressed in the purple robe he had worn when he leaped into the sea, came toward them from behind the throne. The guilty men, thinking that they were looking at a ghost, fell down in terror before him, confessing their crime and begging for forgiveness. Periander had them severely

punished and restored Arion's silver and gold to him again.

In honor of Corinth's greatest musician and his strange rescuer, a statue, carven of white marble, of the Dolphin with Arion on his arching back, was set up in the market place that all might remember the event. And a constellation of stars is called to this day, the Dolphin, that all may honor the fish who saved the sweetest singer of his time from death.

THE DOLPHIN

THE Dolphin or Delphinus, is a constellation of six stars, four forming the body of the fish and two his curving tail. It is easily found in the summer sky just northeast of Altair, as the four stars of the body make a small diamond-shaped figure.

The early Christians saw in this diamond the Cross of Christ lifted from Calvary to the heavens, though the five stars of Cygnus, the swan, between this group and Vega, make a more brilliant and glorious one and are known as the Northern Cross.

The diamond is also called Job's Coffin which is said to hang between the earth and sky.

The Arabs call it the Riding Camel.

The names Sualocin and Rotanev, given to the leading stars in this constellation, puzzled astronomers who studied old star maps,

until a clever man reversed the spelling and found they turned into "Nicolaus Venator," an assistant of a great Italian Astronomer named Piazzi.

ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

The lights from the parlour and kitchen shone out
  Through the blinds and the windows and bars;
And high overhead and all moving about,
  There were thousands of millions of stars.
There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on a tree,
  Nor of people in Church or in Park,
As the crowds of the stars that looked down upon me,
  And that glittered and winked in the dark.

The Dog, and the Plough, and the Hunter, and all,
  And the star of the sailor, and Mars,
These shone in the sky, and the pail by the wall
  Would be half full of water and stars.
They saw me at last, and they chased me with cries,
  And they soon had me packed into bed;
But the glory kept shining and bright in my eyes,
  And the stars going round in my head.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

GA-DO-WAAS AND HIS STAR-BELT

AN IROQUOIS LEGEND

GA-DO-WAAS dwells in the top sky, and with his four eyes watches every corner of the earth.

At one time Ga-do-waas was an earth dweller and a hunter, but because he presumed to celestial power and tried to destroy all the game in the world, he was caught up and placed in the sky, where he watches the gate through which each soul passes on its way to immortality.

When Ga-do-waas took his place in the sky as soul watcher, he took off his hunting belt which had a charm that enticed game to it, and decorating it with wampum stars, cast it into space, where it spans the entire heavens and illuminates the paths to which he guides each soul.

So luminous is this path that its blended

light reaches down to earth and divides its rays so that one is stationed at each lodge where an Indian is dying, so that the departing soul may not lose its way as it leaves its body.

No human ever sees these rays; they are visible only to the soul. The South Wind accompanies the soul until it reaches the gate where Ga-do-waas watches. When the soul stands at the gate, Ga-do-waas reaches into space and grasps a star which he fastens on his belt to guide the soul on its lonely journey.

When the soul has crossed the entire sky, Ga-do-waas removes the star from his belt and returns it to its appointed place in the heavens.

Though each soul may pass through several lives before it leaves this lower existence, it cannot enter the "Place of the Maker," as the Iroquois Indians call the Happy Hunting Ground, until it has crossed the star-belt of Ga-do-waas. To the Indians, therefore the Milky Way of the white man

is a procession of stars each leading a soul. If there is confusion in this procession, it is because some soul is disturbed and has wandered out of the path; but its own star never loses the way and will search for it and return it to its course.

HARRIET MAXWELL CONVERSE

THE GALAXY OR MILKY WAY

THE Japanese have found perhaps the happiest name for this stream of stars in calling it the River of Light, for when there is no moon to dim its brilliance, the Milky Way stretching across the sky from horizon to horizon, is the most vivid feature of the night.

Practically every race has seen it as a road or river by which the souls of men have reached the other world. The Scandinavians called it the Pathway to Valhalla, Asgard's Bridge over which went the souls of heroes slain in battle. The Egyptians thought it was made of wheat heads strewn along the way as a trail for souls; the American Indians also thought of it as a pathway to the Happy Hunting Ground; the Iroquois called it the Road of Souls Traveling to the Land of the Creator; the Pawnee thought

the departed spirits were driven along it by the wind from the North to the star at the South which is at the end of the trail. The French said it was lighted by candles held by angels. The Eskimos name it the path of ashes, the road of fire signals for the ghosts of the dead. The ancient Mexicans called it the night sister of the rainbow, and its loveliest name is the Pathway of Peace. It is a great help in locating the constellations. Cassiopoeia, on the opposite side of the North Star from the Dipper, is wholly in the Milky Way, as is also the Northern Cross (Cygnus). Facing the north, Vega is to the right of it, Altair to the left, the constellation of Aquila is partly in, partly out of it. Orion is to the right of it, his great dog is partly in it, and his little dog is on the opposite bank. The Gemini have their feet in it. Cepheus, the king, and Perseus are half in half out, and Andromeda lies beside it.

Though beautiful in summer, the Galaxy

is really seen in all its glory in the winter sky when the frost has cleared away the soft haze of autumn.

THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied sun from day to day
Doth his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of the Almighty Hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round this dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice or sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing as they shine,
"The Hand that made us is divine."

JOSEPH ADDISON

Y0-EFA-938